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(US). KIM, Franklin [US/US]; 2727 Ashby Place, Berkeley, CA 94705 (US). TAO, Andrea, R. [US/US]; P.O.Box 8493, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067 (US). HESS, Christian [DE/US]; Langewann 37, 69121 Heidelberg (DE).

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(74) Agent: O'BANION, John, P.; O'Banion & Ritchey LLP, 400 Capitol Mall, Suite 1550, Sacramento, CA 95814 (US).

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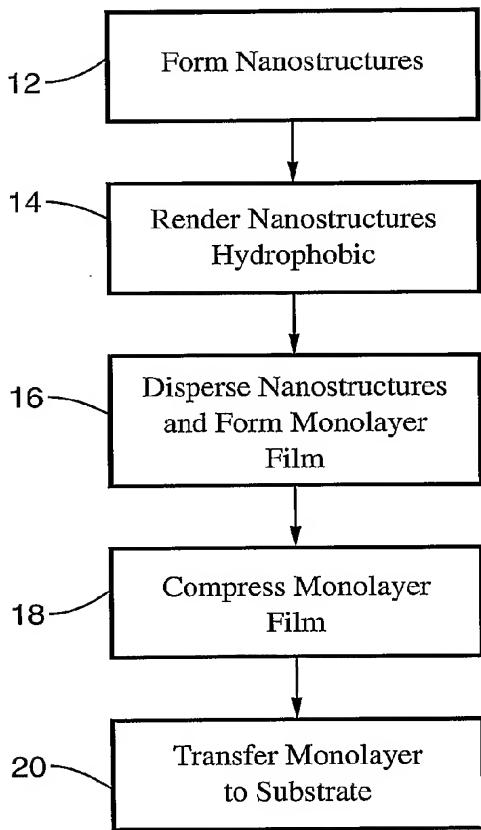
(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): YANG, Peidong [CN/US]; 2151 California Street, Berkeley, CA 94720

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(54) Title: LANGMUIR-BLODGETT NANOSTRUCTURE MONOLAYERS



(57) Abstract: Methods for assembly of monolayers of nanoparticles using the Langmuir-Blodgett technique, as well as monolayers, assemblies, and devices are described. The surface properties of these monolayers are highly reproducible and well-defined as compared to other systems. These monolayers can readily be used for molecular detection in either an airborne or a solution environment, and sensors using the monolayer could have significant implications in chemical and biological warfare detection, national and global security, as well as in medical detection applications.

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LANGMUIR-BLODGETT NANOSTRUCTURE MONOLAYERS**CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

5 [0001] This application claims priority from U.S. provisional application serial number 60/490,975 filed on July 28, 2003, incorporated by reference in its entirety.

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OR DEVELOPMENT**

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**1. Field of the Invention**

30 [0005] This invention pertains generally to the organization of anisotropic building blocks into functional nanoscale assemblies with high packing density, and more particularly to formation of monolayers of nanostructures using the Langmuir-Blodgett technique and devices and mechanisms

fabricated therefrom.

2. Description of Related Art

[0006] Techniques for directing the assembly of metal or semiconductor quantum dots into superstructures have been pursued over the years. Few studies have addressed the organization of one-dimensional nanoscale building blocks such as nanotubes, nanowires, and nanorods into ordered structures except for the 3-dimensional spontaneous superlattice formation of nanorods made from certain materials. On the other hand, Kim, F. et al., "Langmuir-Blodgett Nanorod Assembly", J. Am. Chem. Soc. 123, 4386-4389 (2001), incorporated herein by reference, describes a method for fabricating a 2-dimensional monolayer assembly of BaCrO₄ nanorods using the Langmuir-Blodgett technique.

[0007] Various researchers have successfully prepared Langmuir-Blodgett films of spherical nanoparticles such as Ag, Au, and CdS. Typically, the surface of the nanocrystals are functionalized by organic molecules (usually long alkyl chains) in order to prevent particle aggregation and also to ensure the floating of the nanoparticles on the subphase surface (usually water). The nanoparticles are then dispersed in organic solvents such as toluene, and this solution is spread drop-wise onto the subphase surface. The nanoparticles form a monolayer on the water-air interface, which is slowly compressed. This monolayer can be transferred during the compression using either horizontal or vertical liftoff to substrates such as TEM grid or Si wafer to be inspected under electron and optical microscopes. For spherical nanoparticles, the particles form a gas phase at low densities, where the monolayer is highly compressible without significant increase in the surface pressure. Depending on the particle size, the length of the capping ligand, and the surface pressure, various microscopic structure of islands, wires, and rings composed of the nanoparticles can be formed. As the monolayer is compressed, the nanoparticles start to form a condensed phase, usually a hexagonally close packed structure due to the isotropic inter-particle interactions.

[0008] Nanoscale science, however, is about assembling matter at multiple length scales, from atomic and molecular species to individual nanoscale

building blocks such as nanocrystals, nanorods and nanowires, then from these individual nanoscale building blocks to higher-level functional assemblies and systems. This hierarchical process covers length scale of several orders, from Å to micrometer or larger. The past decades have
5 witnessed great progress in the direction of synthesizing nanocrystals of various compositions and sizes. Significant progress has been made in the area of nanowire synthesis and device application. Successful alignment and patterning of nanowires would significantly impact many areas such as nanoscale electronics, optoelectronics and molecular sensing. A grand
10 challenge, however, resides in the hierarchical integration of the nanoscale building blocks into functional assemblies and ultimately to a system.

[0009] Unlike the traditional lithographical process where precise placement of certain elements or devices is embedded in the designing process, the precise placement of nanoscale building blocks on the right place with right configuration and with exceedingly high densities represents a daunting task
15 for researchers in this field.

[0010] Nanoparticles have attracted a great deal of attention due to their potential applications in optics, electronics, and catalysis. Different methods have been developed to synthesize metallic and semiconductor nanoparticles
20 of different sizes. In the synthesis of new materials based on an ordered assembly of nanoparticles, three significant factors are important in determining the interactions between the nanoparticles and ultimately their superstructures, namely *the shape and size distributions of the nanoparticles, and the surface functionality of the nanoparticles*. A major motivation for
25 research in this field remains the challenge to understand how ordered or complex structures form by self- or directed-assembly, and how such processes can be monitored/controlled in order to prepare structures with a pre-determined geometry/superstructure.

[0011] A prerequisite for nanostructure preparation via the assembly route is
30 the availability of sufficiently stable building blocks that are highly uniform in size and shape. Techniques for directing the assembly of metal or semiconductor quantum dots into novel superstructures have been

extensively pursued over the past decades. Impressive accomplishments in the area of self-assembly of metallic silver and gold nanoparticles, semiconductor CdSe and Ag₂S quantum dots and spherical nanoparticles have been reported. This is due to the possibility of obtaining these spherical nanoparticles as highly monodispersed and stable products. In spite of the large volume of research on the self-assembly of quantum dots, however, little attention has been devoted to the self-assembly of rod-shaped nanoparticles (nanorods) and particles with other different shapes (prisms, hexagons, cubes). This is partly due to the fact that there is no chemistry available for preparing these highly uniform faceted nanocrystals.

5 [0012] After decades of research, the size control of the metal and semiconductor nanocrystals is now well-established. The *deterministic shape control* is, however, still in its infancy although recent efforts into nanorod synthesis have resulted in some very exciting progress. In addition, there has 10 been progress toward shape control of II-IV compound nanocrystals, where easy axis (6-fold symmetry) exists within the crystal structure and has profound impact on the resulting nanocrystal growth habits. In general, however, the mechanism of shaped nanocrystal growth, particularly for those metal systems, is still much elusive and currently under hot debate.

15 [0013] Nanocrystal shape control is still a highly empirical process due to the lack of fundamental understanding of the complex growth process with multiple synthetic parameters. One known approach to shape control is to use surfactants during the metal reduction and particle growth. The surfactant has a role to control the crystal shapes by attaching to selected crystal surface 20 during the growth. Of course, the surfactants also stabilize the metal particles and avoid the undesirable aggregation. In this regard, some linear polymers are recently found to be highly effective to control the crystal shapes. For example, polyacrylate, poly-(N-vinyl-2-pyrrolidone) and polyvinyl alcohol have been used to control the metal particle shapes with a reasonable yield. A 25 main advantage of this surfactant/polymer approach for shaped crystal synthesis is the relative large yield and its potential to produce high purity 30 products.

[0014] Besides the surfactant approach, one additional important factor that could determine the final crystal shapes is the addition of foreign ions. For example, it has been found that different ions and ionic strength could be used to modulate the copper nanocrystal shapes. It has also been found that
5 a small amount of silver addition is critical for the formation of gold nanorods in an electrochemical process.

[0015] Therefore, there is a need for a method of assembling monolayers of nanostructures other than spherical nanoparticles. There is also a need for a method of controlling shape synthesis of metal nanostructures and mediating
10 the interaction among these particles to form different 2-dimensional (2D) or 3-dimensional (3D) superstructures. The resultant superstructures are of importance for their tunable collective physical properties (e.g. optical, magnetic and catalytic properties), where inter-object separation, shape and interfacial structure enable the tuning of properties.

15 BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0016] The present invention addresses the foregoing needs by adapting the Langmuir-Blodgett (LB) technique for assembly of monolayers of nanostructures other than spherical nanoparticles. Surface functionalization of these nanostructures is used to mediate the interaction among these
20 particles to form different 2-dimensional (2D) or 3-dimensional (3D) superstructures.

[0017] In one beneficial embodiment of the invention, a method for fabricating a monolayer of nanostructures comprises the steps of forming a plurality of nanostructures, rendering the nanostructures hydrophobic, dispersing the
25 hydrophobic nanostructures onto a water surface of a Langmuir-Blodgett trough and forming a monolayer film of ordered nanostructures, and compressing the monolayer film. In a further embodiment, the shape of the nanostructures is controlled and selected from the group consisting essentially of cube-shaped, plate-shaped, rod-shaped, triangle-shaped, and hexagon-shaped.
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[0018] In another beneficial embodiment of the invention, a method for fabricating monolayer of silver nanowires comprises forming silver nanowires

using a solution-phase polyol process wherein said nanowires have faceted cross-sections, rendering the nanowires hydrophobic, dispersing the hydrophobic nanowires onto a water surface of a Langmuir-Blodgett trough and forming a monolayer film of nanowires that exhibit substantial parallel alignment, and compressing the monolayer nanowire film and forming a monolayer through an insulator-to-metal transition.

5 [0019] In the case of the formation of silver nanowires, the diameters of approximately 50 nm are achievable. The nanowires can have various cross-sectional shapes, including pentagonal cross-sections, and the tips can be pyramidal with vertices as sharp as 2 nm. The nanowires can be formed as close-packed as parallel arrays with their longitudinal axes aligned perpendicular to the compression direction.

10 [0020] In the foregoing embodiments, the area of the compressed monolayer film can vary to as much as 20 cm² or greater, and the monolayer film beneficially can be deposited onto a substrate for support and structure formation. The substrate can be selected from various materials such as silicon wafers, glass slides, and polymer and other substrates.

15 [0021] The monolayer is capable of functioning as a surface enhanced Raman Spectroscopy (SERS) substrate for molecular sensing, and is suitable for molecular-specific sensing utilizing vibrational signatures. Optionally, the monolayer can be configured for the detection of 2,4-dinitrotoluene (2,4-DENT), for use as an interconnect, as a component in a multilayer structure.

20 [0022] Optionally, the monolayer can be embedded in polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS), in which case the embedded monolayer is capable of functioning as a simple wire-grid optical polarizer.

25 [0023] An aspect of the present invention is assembly of monolayers of aligned silver nanowires using the Langmuir-Blodgett technique. In one embodiment, the monolayers have an area over 20 cm². In one embodiment the nanowires are ~ 50 nm in diameter. In one embodiment, the nanowires possess pentagonal cross-sections. In one embodiment, the nanowires possess pyramidal tips. In one embodiment the pyramidal tips have vertices as sharp as 2 nm.

[0024] Another aspect of the invention is assembly of monolayers of aligned silver nanowires which are close-packed and aligned parallel to each other using the Langmuir-Blodgett technique.

[0025] A further aspect of the invention is assembly of monolayers of aligned 5 silver nanowires which are close-packed as parallel arrays with their longitudinal axes aligned perpendicular to the compression direction.

[0026] Another aspect of the invention is assembly of monolayers of aligned silver nanowires that serve as surface enhanced Raman Spectroscopy substrates.

10 [0027] Another aspect of the invention is assembly of monolayers of aligned silver nanowires that are suitable for molecular-specific sensing utilizing vibrational signatures.

[0028] Another aspect of the invention is to embed monolayers of silver nanowires within polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS).

15 [0029] Another aspect of the invention is to embed multilayers of silver nanowires within polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS).

[0030] Another aspect of the invention is to form flexible nanowire-polymer composites that can serve as simple wire-grid optical polarizers.

20 [0031] Another aspect of the invention is to provide monolayer structures suitable for chemical and biological sensing.

25 [0032] According to a further aspect of the invention, aligned silver nanowire monolayers can be readily used as surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS) substrates for molecular sensing. In one embodiment, an aligned silver nanowire monolayer is configured for the detection of 2,4-dinitrotoluene (2,4-DENT).

30 [0033] Note that the use of the use of our inventive nanowire monolayer as SERS substrates has several advantages. First, the surface properties of these nanowire monolayer are highly reproducible and well-defined as compared to other systems. Second, several unique features of the nanowires, such as sharp vertices, non-circular pentagonal cross-sections, inter-wire coupling, may lead to larger field enhancement factors, offering higher sensitivity under optimal conditions. In addition, strong wire coupling

within the monolayer enables SERS experiments with a broad selection of excitation sources. Lastly, these monolayers can readily be used for molecular detection in either an air-borne or a solution environment. Hence, nanowire-based sensors using our inventive monolayer could have significant implications in chemical and biological warfare detection, national and global security, as well as medical detection applications.

5 [0034] Accordingly, another aspect of the invention comprises high density nanoscale interconnects, sensor arrays, and multilayer structures.

10 [0035] Another aspect of the invention is to transfer monolayers according to the present invention to any desired substrates, including silicon wafers, glass slides, and polymer substrates.

[0036] A still further aspect of the invention is to form 2-dimensional superstructures from shape controlled nanocrystals and nanowires using the Langmuir-Blodgett technique.

15 [0037] Another aspect of the invention is to assemble cube-shaped, plate-shaped, rod-shaped, triangle-shaped, and hexagon-shaped nanocrystals into 2-dimensional superstructures using the Langmuir-Blodgett technique.

[0038] Another aspect of the invention is to form monolayer structures that can be used in lithography applications.

20 [0039] Further aspects of the invention will be brought out in the following portions of the specification, wherein the detailed description is for the purpose of fully disclosing preferred embodiments of the invention without placing limitations thereon.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS

OF THE DRAWING(S)

[0040] The invention will be more fully understood by reference to the following drawings which are for illustrative purposes only:

[0041] FIG. 1 is a flow diagram of an embodiment of a monolayer assembly process according to the present invention.

30 [0042] FIG. 2A and B are transmission electron microscopy images of uniform Ag nanowires employed in an embodiment of the assembly process according to the present invention. The inset in FIG. 2A is an image taken from a

microtomed sample, showing the pentagonal cross-sections of the nanowires.

A high resolution TEM image, the upper inset in FIG. 2B, shows the sharp pentagonal pyramidal tip of a silver nanowire, as schematically illustrated in the bottom inset in FIG. 2B.

5 [0043] FIG. 3A through C are photographs showing the Langmuir-Blodgett (LB) nanowire assembly process of the present invention at different progressive compression stages.

[0044] FIG. 4 is a surface pressure curve recorded during the assembly process illustrated in FIG. 3.

10 [0045] FIG. 5A through D are scanning electron microscopy images (at different magnifications) of the silver nanowire monolayer deposited on a silicon wafer according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0046] FIG. 6 illustrates the UV-VIS absorption spectra of a silver nanowire monolayer assembled according to an embodiment of the present invention. All spectra were obtained at normal incidence with the polarization angles (P) defined as $\theta = 0^\circ$, when the incident electric field is parallel to the direction of nanowire alignment and $\theta = 90^\circ$ when the field is perpendicular to the nanowire axis.

15 [0047] FIG. 7 is a graph illustrating surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy on a silver nanowire monolayer assembled according to an embodiment of the invention, showing SERS spectra of 1-hexadecanethiol on a Langmuir-Blodgett film of silver nanowires with visible (532 nm, 25 mW) and near-infrared excitation (785 nm, 10 mW).

20 [0048] FIG. 8 is a graph illustrating surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy on a silver nanowire monolayer assembled according to an embodiment of the invention, showing SERS spectrum of R6G on the thiol-capped Ag-LB film (532 nm, 25 mW) after 10 min incubation in a 10^{-9} M R6G solution. The inset shows the linear relationship between the Raman intensity ($I_{SERS, 1650}$) and the R6G concentration.

25 [0049] FIG. 9 is a graph illustrating surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy on a silver nanowire monolayer assembled according to an embodiment of the invention, showing SERS spectrum of 2,4-DNT on the thiol-capped Ag

nanowire monolayers after incubation for 10 min in 10⁻² M 2,4-DNT/MeOH solution. The spectrum was recorded using 25 mW of 532 nm laser light. The acquisition time was 10 s.

[0050] FIG. 10A and B are optical images of a silver nanowire monolayer

5 assembled according to an embodiment of the invention under cross-polarizer. The imaging area corresponds to 735 by 521 μm .

[0051] FIG. 11 illustrates the UV-VIS spectrum of five photochemically prepared gold nanorod solutions according to an embodiment of the invention where solution A was prepared with no silver ion addition, and solutions B-E were prepared with increasing amount of silver nitrate solution.

[0052] FIG. 12A-C are transmission electron microscopy (TEM) images of gold nanorods prepared with increasing amounts of silver nitrate solution addition according to an embodiment of the invention, where the bar in the lower portion of each image indicates 50 nm.

15 [0053] FIG. 13 is a high resolution image of a gold nanorod shown in FIG. 12.

[0054] FIG. 14A-D are transmission electron microscopy images of nanorod assemblies at water/air interface at different stages of the compression according to an embodiment of the invention, where FIG. 14A shows isotropic distribution at low pressure, FIG. 14B is monolayer with nematic arrangement, FIG. 14C is a monolayer with smectic arrangement, and FIG. 14D is a nanorod multilayer with nematic configuration, and where the insets in FIG. 14B and FIG. 14D are the Fourier transform of the corresponding image.

[0055] FIG. 15A-E are schematic diagrams showing the organization of shaped nanocrystals according to an embodiment of the invention.

25 [0056] FIG. 16A-E are images of shaped nanostructures according to the present invention, wherein FIG. 16A and B are TEM images of truncated tetrahedral gold nanoparticles and the inset in FIG. 16B is the electron diffraction pattern taken along the [111] zone axis from the particle shown in FIG. 16B, and FIG. 16C and D are SEM images of several partially developed gold tetrahedra.

30 [0057] FIG. 17A-B are images of icosahedral nanocrystals according to the present invention wherein FIG. 18A is a TEM image and FIG. 17B is a SEM

image of icosahedral gold nanoparticles, and wherein the inset in FIG. 17B shows clearly all {111} facets of a typical icosahedron.

5 [0058] FIG. 18A-C are TEM and SEM images of some minority particles observed during synthesis according to the present invention wherein FIG. 18A and B shown decahedrons and FIG. 18C shows an octahedron.

[0059] FIG. 19A-D are TEM and SEM images of gold nanocubes according to the present invention dispersed on a TEM grid and a silicon substrate wherein the inset in FIG. 19C shows the electron diffraction pattern recorded along the [100] zone axis of a gold nanocube shown in FIG. 19D.

10 [0060] FIG. 20 shows the X-ray diffraction patterns for the three types of gold nanocrystals according to the present invention: tetrahedron, cube and icosahedron.

[0061] FIG. 21 shows the UV-VIS spectra for the three types of gold nanocrystals: tetrahedron, cube and icosahedron of FIG. 20.

15 [0062] FIG. 22A-C are images of Pt cubes according to the present invention, wherein FIG. 22A is a TEM image of Pt cubes, FIG. 22B is an HRTEM image of the Pt cube along the [001] zone axis, and FIG. 22C is an HRTEM image of the Pt tetrahedron along the [111] zone axis.

20 [0063] FIG. 23A-C are images of cuboctahedra according to the present invention, wherein FIG. 23A is a TEM image of Pt cuboctahedra, FIG. 23B is an HRTEM image of the Pt cuboctahedron along the [110] zone axis, and FIG. 23C is a 2D projection of an ideal cuboctahedron along the [110] direction.

25 [0064] FIG. 24A-C are images of Pt octahedra according to the invention wherein FIG. 24A is a TEM image of Pt octahedral, FIG. 24B is an HRTEM image of the Pt octahedron along the [110] zone axis, and FIG. 24C is an HRTEM image of the Pt octahedron along the [001] zone axis.

[0065] FIG. 25 is a flow diagram illustrating a generalization of the modified polyol process according to the invention.

30 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0066] The present invention generally comprises methods for fabricating a monolayer of nanostructures and assemblies and devices therefrom. By way

of example, and not of limitation, an embodiment of the fabrication method is illustrated in FIG. 1. In the exemplary embodiment shown in FIG. 1, a plurality of nanostructures is formed at step 12. After the nanostructures are formed, they are rendered hydrophobic at step 14. At step 16, the nanostructures are then dispersed onto a water surface of a Langmuir-Blodgett (LB) trough and a monolayer of ordered nanostructures is formed. The monolayer is then compressed at step 18, and transferred to a substrate at step 20.

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[0067] It will be appreciated that, during the formation step 12, the nanostructures can be formed with various lengths and cross-sectional shapes. The resultant nanostructures can have shapes that include, but are not limited to, cubic, plate-shaped, rod-shaped, triangular, pentagonal and hexagonal. In one beneficial embodiment for use as sensors, the nanostructures can be nanowires having diameters of up to approximately 50 nm and pyramidal tips with vertices as sharp as 2 nm. The size of the monolayer can be varied, and areas exceeding approximately 20 cm² are achievable. The transfer step 20 can comprise, for example, depositing the compressed monolayer onto the surface of a substrate such as silicon, glass, polymer or other material, or embedding the monolayer into a polymer material such as polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS). The resultant monolayers are suitable for use in surface enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS), for molecular-specific sensing using vibrational signatures, as interconnects, and as wire-grid optical polarizers. Assemblies and devices can be formed by placing the monolayer into multilayer structures.

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[0068] In another beneficial embodiment, the nanostructures are silver nanowires formed using a solution-phase polyol process wherein the nanowires have faceted cross-sections. In this embodiment, a monolayer film is formed in step 16 where the nanowires exhibit substantial parallel alignment. During the compression step 18 the monolayer is formed through an insulator-to-metal transition. nanowires are close-packed as parallel arrays with their longitudinal axes aligned perpendicular to the compression direction.

[0069]

EXAMPLE 1

[0070] In the following discussion, we report our success with utilizing the

foregoing processes to assemble aligned monolayers (with area over 20 cm²) of silver nanowires that are ~50 nm in diameter and 2-3 micrometers in length. These nanowires (characterized by pentagonal cross-sections and pyramidal tips) were close-packed as parallel arrays, with their longitudinal axes aligned perpendicular to the compression direction. The resulting nanowire monolayers can serve as good surface enhanced Raman Spectroscopy substrates, exhibit large electromagnetic field enhancement factors (2×10^5 for thiol and 2,4-dinitrotoluene, 2×10^9 for Rhodamine 6G) and can readily be used in ultrasensitive, molecular-specific sensing utilizing vibrational signatures.

5 [0075] Silver nanowires were prepared using poly(vinyl pyrrolidone) (PVP) as the capping agent. The as-prepared samples were purified to remove spherical nanoparticles. The resulting nanowires were uniform in both diameter (45.3 ± 3.6 nm) and aspect ratio (45 ± 5). After functionalizing with 1-hexadecanethiol ligands, the wires were rendered hydrophobic and re-dispersed in chloroform. FIG. 2A and B are transmission electron microscopy images of the uniform Ag nanowires before the LB assembly. The inset in FIG. 2A is an image taken from a microtomed sample, showing the pentagonal cross-sections of the nanowires. A high resolution TEM image, the upper inset in FIG. 2B, shows the sharp pentagonal pyramidal tip of a silver nanowire, as schematically illustrated in the bottom inset in FIG. 2B. An important feature of these nanowires was their pentagonal cross-sections, as shown in the inset of FIG. 2A. In addition, these wires possessed pentagonal pyramidal ends with vertices as sharp as 2 nm as shown in the lower inset of FIG. 2B. The non-circular cross-sections and sharp wire tips potentially have 10 important consequence for molecular sensing using surface enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS).

15 [0076] The nanowires were then dispersed onto a water surface of the Langmuir-Blodgett trough. It is important to note that the displacement of the PVP capping agents with thiol ligands was required to render the nanowire 20 surface hydrophobic as well as to prevent aggregation.

25 [0077] The assembly process was effectively a microscopic version of "logs-on-a-river". FIG. 3A through C are photographs showing the LB nanowire

assembly process at different progressive compression stages. FIG. 4 is a surface pressure curve recorded during the assembly process illustrated in FIG. 3. FIG. 3A shows the nanowires dispersed on a trough water surface. At this stage, the surface pressure was zero (see FIG. 4), the nanowires were randomly oriented, and the water surface was essentially transparent. The monolayer was then compressed. When the nanowires were compressed, the surface pressure increased (FIG. 3B, FIG. 4). Above 14 mN/m, the monolayer underwent a Mott-insulator-to-metal transition, as previously seen in Langmuir-Blodgett monolayers of spherical Ag nanocrystals. This transition was indicated by the appearance of a metallic sheen on the nanowire monolayer surface. FIG. 3C shows the monolayer in its highly-reflective metallic state. This particular sample covered a trough area of 20 cm². However, the final aligned area is limited only by the amount of initial material used for the compression. Therefore, it is possible to prepare these monolayers on any substrate over an arbitrarily large area.

[0081] Significantly, the compressed silver nanowire monolayer exhibited remarkable alignment parallel to the trough barrier. FIG. 5A-D show scanning electron microscopy (SEM) images at different magnifications of the solver nanowire monolayer transferred onto a silicon wafer. As can be seen, the nanowires are aligned side-by-side over large areas, resembling a nematic 2-dimensional ordering of a liquid crystal. This large-scale directional ordering was also verified by imaging the sample under an optical microscope equipped with a set of cross-polarizers. The aligned nanowire domains displayed alternating extinction patterns when the sample was rotated every forty-five degrees.

[0082] The dependence of the extinction spectra as a function of the polarization angle of the input optical beam was recorded with a polarized UV-VIS spectrometer. FIG. 6 shows a typical set of UV-VIS spectra of the silver nanowire monolayer at different polarization angles. All spectra were obtained at normal incidence with the polarization angles (P) defined as $\theta = 0^\circ$, when the incident electric field is parallel to the direction of nanowire alignment and $\theta = 90^\circ$ when the field is perpendicular to the nanowire axis. Note that strong

optical dichroism can be seen in these spectra. Three sets of peaks were observed: 350 nm, 380 nm, and a broad peak at 500-700 nm. When the polarization of the incident light was perpendicular to the wire axis, the transverse mode of the surface plasma experienced preferred excitation; as a result, the 380 nm extinction peak exhibited the highest intensity with this configuration. When the polarization angle was increased from zero degrees (normal to wire axis) to ninety degrees (parallel to wire axis), the intensity for the 500-600 nm peaks increased. This extinction peak can be attributed to the excitation of longitudinal plasma within the monolayer. The significant broadening is believed to stem from the coupling of electromagnetic waves among neighboring nanowires.

[0083] Significantly, this large area of nanowire alignment observed enables the fabrication of high density nanoscale interconnects and sensor arrays, as well as multilayer structures via a layer-by-layer transfer approach. These monolayers can be readily transferred to any desired substrates, including silicon wafers, glass slides, and polymer and other substrates. For example, we have successfully embedded monolayers and multilayers of these silver nanowires within polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS), giving flexible nanowire-polymer composites that can serve as simple wire-grid optical polarizers. Thus, the present invention is a very powerful technique for the organization of anisotropic building blocks into functional nanoscale assemblies with unprecedented high packing density.

[0084] It is also significant that these aligned nanowire monolayers can be readily used as surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS) substrates for molecular sensing with high sensitivity and specificity. These metallic layers are expected to exhibit giant local electromagnetic (EM) field enhancement, particularly for nanowires with sharp tips and non-circular cross-sections (as in the example described above, a pentagonal cross-section). FIG. 7 shows the SERS spectrum of 1-hexadecanethiol on a Langmuir-Blodgett film of silver nanowires for visible (532 nm, 25 mW) and near-infrared excitation (785 nm, 10 mW). The observed bands were characteristic of 1-hexadecanethiol. The Raman bands in the low-frequency

part of the spectrum include: the $\nu(\text{C-S})_{\text{trans}}$ at 701 cm^{-1} ; the CH_3 rocking mode at 891 cm^{-1} ; the $\nu(\text{C-C})$ at 1064 , 1096 , and 1128 cm^{-1} ; the CH_2 wag at 1295 cm^{-1} ; the CH_2 twist at 1435 cm^{-1} ; and the CH_2 scissor at 1455 cm^{-1} . The $\nu(\text{C-S})_{\text{trans}}$ at 701 cm^{-1} is indicative of well-ordered alkyl chains with largely *trans* conformation near the thiol headgroup. In the C-C region, the presence of an intense 1128 cm^{-1} and a weaker 1096 cm^{-1} neighbor (indicative of *trans* bonding) suggests that the adsorbed thiol possesses a “solid-like” structure extending beyond the surface region into the hydrocarbon tail.

5 [0085] The enhancement factor (EF) for 1-hexadecanethiol/Ag was calculated
10 according to the following expression:

$$\text{EF} = [\text{I}_{\text{SERS}}]/[\text{I}_{\text{Raman}}] \times [\text{M}_b]/[\text{M}_{\text{ads}}]$$

15 where M_b is the concentration of molecules in the bulk sample, M_{ads} is the concentration of adsorbed molecules, and I_{SERS} and I_{Raman} are intensities in the SERS and Raman spectrum, respectively. The concentration of adsorbed
molecules was estimated by dividing the total surface area of a single
nanowire by the van der Waals dimensions ($2.3 \text{ \AA} \times 2.3 \text{ \AA}$) of the thiol head
group. Assuming 1-hexadecanethiol forms a close-packed monolayer
perpendicular to the surface, the number of adsorbed molecules was
calculated to be $2.5 \times 10^{14}/\text{cm}^2$. Intensities were compared to the Raman
scattering of a 0.1 M 1-hexadecanethiol solution. For the vibration mode at
 1295 cm^{-1} , an EF of 2×10^5 was obtained. Values of similar magnitude have
been observed on other SERS-active Ag substrates at optimum visible
excitation wavelengths. This enhancement can be attributed to increased
local optical fields near the Ag surface due to the excitation of surface
plasmon resonances.

20 [0086] Interestingly, near-infrared excitation (785 nm) of 1-hexadecanethiol/Ag
gave rise to comparable SERS intensities. We believe this effect stems from
the interaction of individual Ag wires within the film. In the absorption
spectrum of an LB film, a broad resonance evolves from this interaction,
giving a peak around 550 nm that extends into the near-infrared region. Thus,
30 LB nanowire films should serve as extremely versatile SERS substrates,
allowing excitation over a wide range of frequencies.

[0087] Rhodamine 6G (R6G) is a strongly fluorescent xanthene derivative which shows a molecular resonance Raman (RR) effect when excited with 25 mW at 532 nm. FIG. 8 depicts the SERS spectrum of R6G on a thiol-covered LB film after a 10-minute incubation in a 10^{-9} M R6G solution. The quenching of the fluorescence and huge SERS enhancement factor indicate that the R6G molecules spontaneously adsorb on the Ag nanowires. In addition, a linear relationship between Raman intensity ($I_{SERS, 1650}$) and R6G concentration was observed as shown in the inset of FIG. 8. A least-square fit of the data (solid line in inset) using a Langmuir adsorption isotherm gives an adsorption energy of 46 kJ/mol, which suggests that R6G has strong interaction with the surface of the wires. More importantly, these observations show that despite the presence of thiol capping agents, the surface of the Ag nanowire film offers free sites which allow for the adsorption and therefore identification of any unknown analyte. Based on the field enhancement factor obtained for the thiol and the fact that the ratio of the Raman intensities of the R6G- and thiol-related C-C stretching bands at R6G saturation coverage is $\sim 10^4$, the EF for R6G is estimated to be 2×10^9 .

[0088] The observed large enhancement factors suggest that these monolayers can indeed serve as robust solid substrates for carrying out molecular sensing with high sensitivity and specificity (as SERS readily reveals the vibrational signature of an analyte). Here we demonstrate the capability of our nanowire substrates for the detection of 2,4-dinitrotoluene (2,4-DNT), the most common nitroaromatic compound for detecting buried landmines and other explosives. SERS from 2,4-DNT has been obtained previously. FIG. 9 shows a SERS spectrum of 2,4-DNT on the thiol-capped Ag nanowire monolayers after incubation for 10 min in 10^{-2} M 2,4-DNT/MeOH solution. The spectrum was recorded using 25 mW of 532 nm laser light. The acquisition time was 10 s. The NO_2 stretching mode at 1348 cm^{-1} , which is the key vibrational mode for the analysis of 2,4-DNT, is clearly displayed and well-separated from the surfactant-related Raman bands at 1295 and 1435 cm^{-1} . We achieved a sensitivity of approximately 0.7 pg, assuming a monolayer coverage for 2,4-DNT and an area of 45 \AA^2 per adsorbate. Based

on the same assumptions, an EF of 2×10^5 was calculated for the vibration mode at 1348 cm^{-1} .

[0089] Although comparable sensitivities and EF values have been reported for colloidal Au and Ag, as well as roughened metal surfaces, the use of our nanowire monolayers as SERS substrates has several advantages. First, the surface properties of these nanowire monolayers are highly reproducible and well-defined as compared to other systems. Second, the unique features of the nanowires, such as sharp vertices, non-circular pentagonal cross-sections, inter-wire coupling, may lead to larger field enhancement factors, offering higher sensitivity under optimal conditions. In addition, strong wire coupling within the monolayers enables SERS experiments with a broad selection of excitation sources. Lastly, these monolayers can readily be used for molecular detection in either an air-borne or a solution environment. Hence, our nanowire-based sensing scheme could have significant implications in chemical and biological warfare detection, national and global security, as well as medical detection applications.

[0090] EXAMPLE 2

[0091] *Ag Nanowire Synthesis*

[0092] Silver nanowires were prepared via the solution-phase polyol process, where silver salt is reduced in the presence of a stabilizing polymer. A solution of poly(vinyl pyrrolidone) (0.36M, 5 mL, MW = 55,000, Aldrich) was prepared using anhydrous ethylene glycol (Aldrich) as the solvent and subsequently heated to $160\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$. A room temperature solution of silver nitrate (Alfa Aesar) dissolved in ethylene glycol (0.12M, 2.5 mL) was then added drop-wise into the hot PVP solution at a rate of approximately 0.125 mL/min. Heat and stirring were kept constant during this step. Upon initial addition of silver nitrate to the PVP, the solution immediately turned a bright yellow color, indicating the formation of silver seed particles. As the addition proceeded, the solution underwent a series of color changes: orange, red, bright green, brown, and finally opaque olive green. An opaque gray-green solution containing a white iridescent precipitate indicated the formation of silver wires.

[0093] Spherical silver nanoparticles are byproducts of this synthesis, but can be removed using size separation. After synthesis, the wire solution was cooled to room temperature and diluted in a 1:30 ratio with ethanol. The dilute wire solution was centrifuged (1.7 krpm, 20 minutes). The products were collected and redispersed in ethanol. This process was repeated approximately six more times. The final pellet was dispersed in 10 mL of ethanol. This procedure removed excess PVP and gave a homogenous wire solution in terms of both shape and size.

5 [0094] EXAMPLE 3

10 [0095] *Ag Nanowire Surface Functionalization*

[0096] For Langmuir-Blodgett experiments, the surface of the nanowires must be hydrophobic. We functionalized our silver nanowires using long-chain alkanethiols, which readily adsorb onto the nanowire surface and displace PVP. A 100 μ M solution of 1-hexadecanethiol in chloroform was added to the wire solution in a 1:1 ratio and then sonicated for approximately 5 minutes. After at least 10 hours, the solution was then transferred into glass vials and centrifuged (3.3 krpm, 15 minutes). The precipitates were collected and redispersed in chloroform. The hydrophobic silver wires readily precipitate out of chloroform as a beige solid. This process was repeated approximately six times to remove any excess thiol. The final solution appeared opaque gray or tan.

20 [0097] EXAMPLE 4

25 [0098] *Ag Nanowire Langmuir-Blodgett Assembly*

[0099] The solution of dispersed nanowires was spread drop-wise (typically 2.5 ml of 10^{10} wires/ml) onto the water surface of a Langmuir-Blodgett trough (Nima Technology, M611). The nanowires form a grayish layer on the water surface, which is compressed by a barrier with a speed of 30 cm²/min (the width of the trough is 10 cm). The surface pressure was monitored with a Wilhelmy plate during the compression. The film was compressed to different surface pressures, and then deposited to various substrates, such as silicon and glass, for further studies. Typically, the substrates were dipped and then pulled vertically through the film with a speed of 2 mm/min.

[00100]

EXAMPLE 5

[00101]*Structural and Optical Analysis*

[00102] The Ag nanowire monolayers were examined with an optical microscope equipped with cross-polarizers. The ordering of the nanowires within the monolayers was examined in detail using scanning electron microscope (JEOL 6430) and transmission electron microscope (Philip CM 200). The absorption spectra of the nanowire colloidal solution as well as the nanowire monolayers on substrates were collected using a HP 8453 UV-VIS spectrometer and an Acton UV-VIS/reflectance spectrometer, both equipped with a polarizer accessory. The resultant images under the cross polarizer are shown in FIG. 10A-B. The imaging area corresponds to 735 by 521 μm .

[00103]

EXAMPLE 6

[00104]*SERS Experiments on Nanowire Monolayer***[00105]**

Surface Raman spectra from the organothiol monolayers on Ag were recorded within 24 h after preparation to minimize any effect of oxidation in air. Rhodamine 6G (Aldrich) was used as purchased. Starting with a R6G stock solution of 10^{-4} M, concentrations down to 10^{-10} M were prepared by successive dilution by factors of 10 or 100. After a 10-minute incubation in the corresponding R6G or DNT solution, SERS measurements were made in dry, ambient conditions.

[00106]

The visible Raman spectra were recorded using a Holoprobe spectrometer (Kaiser Optical) equipped with a Nd:YAG laser frequency-doubled to 532 nm. The laser was operated at 25 mW with a spot size approximately 100 μm in diameter. To reduce photodecomposition, samples were rotated at 600 rpm. The Raman-scattered light was collected in the 180° direction (perpendicular to the substrate) and detected with an electrically-cooled CCD camera (256×1022 pixels) after cutting off the laser light with a high-performance holographic notch filter. The spectral resolution of the instrument is 5 cm^{-1} . The near-infrared Raman spectra were recorded using a Renishaw Raman spectrometer with 785 nm diode laser light. It was operated at 2 mW with spot size of 1-2 μm .

[00107] To summarize, Langmuir-Blodgett technique was used to assemble

monolayers (with area over 20 cm²) of aligned silver nanowires that are ~ 50 nm in diameter and 2-3 micrometers in length. These nanowires possess pentagonal cross-sections and pyramidal tips. They are close-packed, and are aligned parallel to each other. The resulting nanowire monolayers serve 5 as excellent substrates for surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS) with large electromagnetic field enhancement factors (2×10^5 for thiol and 2,4-dinitrotoluene, and 2×10^9 for Rhodamine 6G) and can readily be used in ultrasensitive, molecular-specific sensing utilizing vibrational signatures.

[00108]

EXAMPLE 7

[00109] *2-Dimensional Tiling with Shaped Nanocrystals*

[00110] We synthesized gold nanorods with controlled aspect ratios by using photochemistry in the presence of silver ions. The process was a simple photo-reduction of gold ions in the presence of silver ions. It was observed 15 that the color of the resulted solution varied with the amount of silver ions added, which is indicative of gold nanorods with different aspect ratios. FIG. 11 shows the UV-VIS spectra for various solutions prepared with different amounts of silver ion addition. Curve A in FIG. 11 shows the spectra when no silver ion solution was added and consisted of mostly spherical particles. The UV-VIS spectrum exhibits single absorption peak at 530 nm. Curves B 20 through E in FIG. 11 show the spectra as increasing amounts of silver ion solution (silver nitrate) are added. When silver ions were added, gold nanorods formed which can be seen from the additional absorption peak due to the longitudinal surface plasmon in the UV-VIS spectrum. Typically their UV-VIS spectra show one transversal surface plasma peak at 520 nm and longitudinal ones at 600-800 nm.

[00111] FIG. 12A-C show transmission electron microscopy (TEM) images of 25 gold nanorods produced by addition of increasing amount of silver nitrate solution. The average aspect ratios for these rods can be increased from one to ten. FIG. 13 shows a high-resolution TEM image of one of the nanorods. The crystallographic facets are the same as the electrochemically synthesized 30 gold nanorods, with the growth direction being [001] and the side mostly covered with {001} and {110} facets. When the aspect ratio is 1, virtually

nano-cubes of Au were obtained.

[00112] The exact mechanism how these foreign ions effects the particle growth habits can be examined through systematical time-resolved UV-VIS absorption and transmission electron microscopy studies. A natural question 5 is whether it is possible to use other metal ions or use different ionic strength to affect the final crystal habits. However, by adding different organic molecules/polymers, we have arrived at some interesting synthetic conditions for obtaining crystals of different shapes. Such shapes can be determined empirically through experimentation. Other factors that may affect shape are 10 concentrations, temperature, different surfactants and cosurfactants, foreign ion addition, and ionic strength. These nanocrystals, with their uniform sizes and shapes, are ideal building blocks for Langmuir-Blodgett monolayer formation. Additionally, purity and yield are important.

[00113] As described above, the Langmuir-Blodgett (LB) technique is a very 15 powerful assembly approach with several appealing characteristics. First, a large area of ordered nanocrystal monolayer is formed which can be easily transferred onto other substrates, and it is also fairly easy to carry out multiple or alternating layer deposition. In addition, the inter-particle distance and the 20 final superstructures can be finely tuned via control of the compression process. Fundamentally, this would be an interesting issue of 2-dimensional tiling with uniform nanoscale "tiles".

[00114] For Langmuir-Blodgett films of various nanoparticles such as Ag, Au, and CdS where the nanoparticles are spherical, the particles form a gas phase at low densities, and the monolayer is highly compressible without 25 significant increase in the surface pressure. Depending on the particle size, the length of the capping ligand, and the surface pressure, various microscopic structure of islands, wires, and rings composed of the nanoparticles can be formed. As the monolayer is compressed, the particles start to form a condensed phase, usually a hexagonally close packed 30 structure due to the isotropic inter-particle interactions.

[00115] In contrast to spherical nanoclusters, several fundamental questions immediately arise in order to form well-defined 2D or 3D assemblies of the

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shaped nanocrystals such as (1) how will the shape, aspect ratio and size of the nanocrystals affect their organization behavior, (2) will their assembly behavior fundamentally differ from the mesoscale assembly that has been extensively studied by the Whiteside's group at Harvard, (3) what kind of ordered (super)structures can be expected, and (4) how will the collective properties correlate with the structures of these assemblies?

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[00116] As described above, we have applied the Langmuir-Blodgett technique to the assembly of one-dimensional nanostructures such as nanorods and nanowires. The methodology we used for nanorod assembly exemplifies the approach that we will adopt for nanocrystals of other shapes. First, these 1D nanostructures are rendered hydrophobic by surfactant surface functionalization. It was found that the surface pressure π of the nanorod monolayer follows a π -A (area) curve that is commonly observed during the LB compression of amphiphilic surfactants or surfactant capped nanoclusters on the water surface. Superstructure formation from these anisotropic nanoparticles, however, displays much more complex behavior than the spherical particles, as we have observed with BaCrO₄, BaWO₄, and Au nanorods. We have also observed that superstructure formation is highly dependent on the aspect ratio of the nanorods and the collective interactions among these individual units.

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[00117] FIG. 14A-D are transmission electron microscopy images of nanorod assemblies at water/air interface at different stages of the compression, where FIG. 14A shows isotropic distribution at low pressure, FIG. 14B is monolayer with nematic arrangement, FIG. 14C is a monolayer with smectic arrangement, and FIG. 14D is a nanorod multilayer with nematic configuration, and where the insets in FIG. 14B and FIG. 14D are the Fourier transform of the corresponding image. For nanorods with short aspect ratio (~ 3-5) such as the BaCrO₄ nanorods (diameters, ~ 5 nm), they form raft-like aggregates of generally three to five rods by aligning side-by-side due to the directional capillary force and the van der Waals attraction at low densities (i.e. low surface pressure). These aggregates are dispersed on the subphase surface in a mostly isotropic state (FIG. 14A). As the monolayer is

compressed, the nanorods start to align into a certain direction and form a nematic phase (FIG. 14B). With further compression, nanorod assemblies with smectic arrangement are obtained (FIG. 14C), which is characterized by layer-by-layer stacking of ribbon-like nanorod superstructures. During this compression, the areal density of the nanorods also increases significantly from ~500 to ~5000 / μm^2 . Above certain pressure, the monolayer breaks into multilayers, where it resumes a disordered 3-dimensional (3D) nematic configuration (FIG. 14D). The overall nematic arrangement in the multilayer nanorod superstructures is frequently disrupted by singularities such as 5 disclinations.

10 [00118] This LB technique was also applied to the thiol capped Au nanorods (diameter ~ 8 nm) of similar aspect ratio. However, it is observed that these metal nanorods have great tendency to form nanorod ribbons spontaneously. In these nanoribbon superstructures, many Au nanorods align side by side. 15 Compression of these nanorod monolayers does not exhibit the same phase evolution as seen in the BaCrO₄ system. In most cases, isotropic arrangements of the Au nanorod ribbon structures are “quenched” during the compression. This difference can be attributed to the much greater attractive van der Waals and directional capillary interaction among Au nanorods as 20 compared with the BaCrO₄ nanorods as well as the polydispersity of the available Au nanorods.

25 [00119] On the other hand, the organization of the BaWO₄ nanorods (diameter ~10 nm) with large aspect ratio (~ 150) again differs significantly from the assembly of the short BaCrO₄, Au, and CdSe nanorods where ribbon-like and vertical rectangular/hexagonal superstructures are often favored. With low surface pressure, these nanorods are fairly dispersed; the directors of nanorod are isotropically distributed, and no superstructures can be observed. After compression, these nanorods readily align in a roughly same direction and form a nematic layer. With strong compression, these nanorods form 30 bundles that have almost perfect side-by-side alignment between nanorods. The preference of nematic phase formation upon compression is a distinct character of the assembly behavior for nanorods of large aspect ratio,

[00120] Our experiments on nanorod assembly using the Langmuir-Blodgett technique clearly indicates that the formation of a superstructure is a highly complex phenomena and is largely determined by the interactions between the nanocrystals and their aspect ratio/shape. Both entropy and energy considerations are important here in order to account for the complex self-organization behaviors of these highly anisotropic nanoparticles. In a solution of rigid nanorods with sufficient monodispersity, a competition between two types of entropy exists: for low concentrations of nanorods the orientational entropy dominates and will be maximized by an isotropic distribution, whereas for high concentrations the packing entropy becomes more important which will favor more ordered structures. Possible ordered structures include orientational and positional ordered hexagonal mesophase and orientational ordered nematic, smectic liquid crystal, lamellar and columnar structures.

This ordering occurs in order to maximize the entropy of the self-assembled structure by minimizing the excluded volume per particle in the array.

Additional interparticle forces can be classified into two main categories: repulsive and attractive. More specifically, for charged colloidal particles, the most commonly used effective pair potential consists of a van der Waals attraction and a screened Coulomb repulsion term. In addition, this interaction contains other components of electrostatic repulsion, van der Waals, solvation, and steric surface forces. Both hard inter-object interactions (entropy term) and soft molecular interactions (energy term) will contribute to determine which superstructure ultimately the nanorods will form.

[00121] The assembly behavior of realistic nanorods would deviate from those of ideal hard rods due to the existence of significant van der Waals interaction and directional capillary interaction. Strictly, none of our experimental 1D nanostructures can be considered as ideal hard rods. For example, in explaining the tendency of nanorods to align parallel to each other, another reason would be the higher lateral capillary forces along the length of a nanorod as compared to its width. This anisotropy of interaction between nanorods could be one important driving force for the side by side alignment of nanorods rather than end to end. It is also true that between any two

bodies of matter there is an attractive van der Waals force caused by the interaction between the fluctuating electromagnetic fields associated with their polarizabilities. The attraction between two atoms separated by distance r goes as r^6 (the Lennard-Jones potential) and the interaction between two spherical particles of radius R , obtained by summing over all pairs of atoms, is

$$V_A(r) = -\frac{A}{6} \left[\frac{2R^2}{r^2 - 4R^2} + \frac{2R^2}{r^2} + \ln\left(1 - \frac{4R^2}{r^2}\right) \right]$$

where r is now the center-to-center separation. The strong directional capillary and van der Waals interaction between the Au nanorods explains well why their 2-dimensional assembly process deviates significantly from the ideal hard rod system.

[00122] While the existence of strong attractive interactions among the nanorods would complicate their assembly process, it should be recognized that these interactions could also be systematically tuned in order to form desired nanorod superstructures. For example, the Hamaker constant A in the van der Waals attraction term is determined by the material properties of the particles and suspension medium, in particular their frequency-dependent polarizabilities. Of relevance here is the fact that if the particles and liquid have equal polarizabilities, then $A = 0$. Thus if the refractive indices of the particles and liquid are matched, van der Waals attractions are expected to be negligible. Consequently, the interaction between the nanorods can be modified as desired. The surface functionality of the these 1D nanostructures plays significant roles in regulating the attractive and repulsive interactions among these individual units, consequently determining their final 2-dimensional or 3-dimensional superstructures. Aligning these 1D nanoscale building blocks into nematic or smectic phases has its significance in both fundamental study of the structure-properties correlation of nanostructures and the technological important areas such as formation of high density logic and memory devices.

[00123] With this nanorod assembly in mind, the Langmuir-Blodgett technique can be adapted for 2-dimensional assembly of other shaped nanocrystals. For such other shaped nanocrystals, the nanocrystal colloidal suspension is

spread dropwise on the water surface of a Langmuir-Blodgett trough. The nanocrystal surface layer is then compressed slowly. At different stages of compression, the nanocrystal assemblies at the water-air interface are then transferred carefully onto TEM grids covered with continuous carbon thin film using the Langmuir-Schäffer horizontal liftoff procedure. The superstructures of the assemblies are then examined systematically using TEM. The phase diagram for the assembly of nanocrystals of different shapes is then explored in a similar fashion (i.e., surface functionalization and Langmuir-Blodgett assembly. FIG. 15A-E are schematic diagrams showing the organization of shaped nanocrystals according to an embodiment of the invention, with FIG. 15E representing a possible superstructure.

15 [00124] Once empirical data is collected for the single component assembly, the experiments will be extended to the study of bi-component assembly at 2-dimension (i.e., monolayer assembly of mixture of uniform dots and rods or others). In this study, interaction between these two components will be modified through surface functionalization and their assembly behavior will be examined in a similar fashion as we have carried out for the single component system.

20 [00125] Finally, the monolayer of the ordered nanocrystals will be embedded in an inorganic (e.g. SiO₂) or polymer matrix in order to obtain continuous form of the monolayer that can be manipulated in a macroscopic form. This can be accomplished by polymerizing and cross-linking the monolayer on the water surface after the assembly process. These monolayer metal
25 nanocrystal/matrix composites are expected to be flexible, easy to manipulate and can be readily applied in catalytic and sensing application.

[00126] EXAMPLE 8

[00127] *Platonic Gold Nanocrystals*

30 [00128] Known to the ancient Greeks, there are five Platonic solids that can be constructed by selecting a regular convex polygon and having the same number of them meet at each corner: tetrahedron, octahedron, hexahedron (cube), icosahedron, dodecahedron. The beauty in their symmetry and their apparent simplicity continue to inspire generations of mathematicians and

scientists. In nature, certain viruses and radiolaria also routinely take the form of these polyhedral shapes. Recently, the concept of shape control has started to revitalize the centuries-old metal colloidal synthesis. Nanoparticles of various shapes (e.g., rods, wires, prisms, cubes), particularly those of silver and platinum, have been prepared using a variety of different methodologies. The preparation of nanoparticles of highly symmetric Platonic shapes with a unified method, however, has yet to be demonstrated, and is by itself a scientific curiosity and great challenge that requires exquisite crystal growth control.

5 [00129] Herein, we describe a systematic shape-evolution of gold nanocrystals with sizes of 100-300 nm in a modified polyol process. By adding surface-regulating polymer and foreign ions, we can readily access the distinct shapes of tetrahedron, cube, octahedron, and icosahedron (dubbed Platonic Nanocrystals) with high yield and good uniformity. These nanocrystals have the perfect symmetry for 2- and 3-dimensional packing and therefore could enable the rational tuning of their optical, electrical, and catalytic properties.

10 [00130] Gold nanocrystals were produced via a modified polyol process, with the presence of the surface-regulating polymer poly(vinyl pyrrolidone) (PVP). Briefly, ethylene glycol solutions of hydrogen tetrachloroaurate ($\text{HAuCl}_4 \cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$) and PVP were injected simultaneously into boiling ethylene glycol. Ethylene glycol served both as the solvent and reducing agent for the reaction. PVP not only stabilized the particles but also controlled the shape of the particles. The molar ratio between the PVP and the gold precursor was kept between 4.3 and 8.6. Gold particles formed within minutes, and the color of the final diluted colloidal solution was iridescently blue.

15 [00131] Transmission electron microscopy (TEM) imaging showed that the majority (~70%) of the particles had a triangular shape (FIG. 16A), and sizes of 210 ± 20 nm. Electron diffraction of a single particle (FIG. 16B, inset) showed that the particle was single crystalline, with the top and bottom covered with {111} surfaces. This initial inspection of the TEM data suggests the formation of flat nano-prisms as have been reported previously for silver. Detailed scanning electron microscopy (SEM) studies, however, revealed

otherwise. FIG. 16A-E are images of shaped nanostructures according to the present invention, wherein FIG. 16A and B are TEM images of truncated tetrahedral gold nanoparticles and the inset in FIG. 16B is the electron diffraction pattern taken along the [111] zone axis from the particle shown in FIG. 16B, and FIG. 16C and D are SEM images of several partially developed gold tetrahedra. Interestingly, the sides of the particles were clearly slanted (FIG. 16C, D). This indicates that rather than being flat prisms, these particles can be more accurately described as tetrahedra with a truncated corner, or as partially developed tetrahedra (hereafter we will call them tetrahedra for simplicity). The surfaces of these particles are dominated with {111} planes, which make them energetically favorable compared to prisms with other high-energy side surfaces such as (1 $\bar{1}$ 0) or (11 $\bar{2}$). Occasionally, we were able to observe similar-sized particles with nearly fully-developed tetrahedral shapes (FIG. 16D), which points to the possibility of obtaining gold tetrahedra upon further growth of these triangular particles.

[00132] It was found that the nanoparticle shapes were highly sensitive to the gold precursor concentration used in the experiments. By slightly reducing the gold precursor concentration, we were able to produce nanocrystals with icosahedral shapes. In one particular example, the gold precursor concentration was reduced to 4/5 of that used for the synthesis of tetrahedra, and the final molar ratio between the PVP and the gold precursor was maintained at 8.6. FIG. 17A-B are images of icosahedral nanocrystals according to the present invention wherein FIG. 18A is a TEM image and FIG. 17B is a SEM image of icosahedral gold nanoparticles, and wherein the inset in FIG. 17B shows clearly all {111} facets of a typical icosahedron. Observation by TEM showed that > 90% of the particles had a projected hexagonal shape (FIG. 17A) and sizes of 230 ± 20 nm. The size of a particle is defined here as the distance from one edge of the hexagonal projection to the opposite side. Electron diffraction on a single particle showed a complex pattern, indicating that the particle was composed of multiple crystal domains. Further investigation with SEM showed that the particles were mostly

icosahedra (FIG. 17B and inset). Note that icosahedral particles of fcc metals represent one of the most investigated multiply twinned particles (MTP) in gas phase experiments. Our observation, however, is the first time that uniform metal particles with such complex yet well defined structures and sizes ranging from several tens to hundreds of nanometers have been prepared in solution. In addition to the shapes of tetrahedron or icosahedron, which formed the majority of the product, a small portion (~10%) of decahedra (another type of MTP) and regular octahedra were also commonly observed in the final products as can be seen from FIG. 18 which shows TEM and SEM images of some minority particles observed during synthesis according to the present invention wherein FIG. 18A and B shown decahedrons and FIG. 18C shows an octahedron.

[00133] Tetrahedra and icosahedra represent two of the Platonic solid shapes that are covered with the {111} family of planes. Further shape control can be achieved by introducing foreign ions during the nanocrystal growth process. For example, addition of small amount of silver ions prior to the gold tetrahedron synthesis yields uniform gold nanocubes. Typically, 0.5 ml of a 0.0059 M silver nitrate (AgNO_3) solution (1.1 % of the gold precursor) in ethylene glycol solution was injected into the boiling ethylene glycol five minutes before the injection of the gold precursor and the PVP. The color of the final colloidal solution was iridescently bluish-purple. TEM and SEM observation showed that gold nanocubes (> 95%) of average size of 150 ± 14 nm were produced. FIG. 19A-D are TEM and SEM images of gold nanocubes according to the present invention dispersed on a TEM grid and a silicon substrate wherein the inset in FIG. 19C shows the electron diffraction pattern recorded along the [100] zone axis of a gold nanocube shown in FIG. 19D. Electron diffraction (FIG. 19C inset) on a single particle showed that the cube is a single domain, with {100} surfaces.

[00134] While SEM and TEM often sample only a small portion of the products, X-ray diffraction (XRD) can be used to assess the overall quality and purity of these faceted nanoparticles. Three XRD patterns recorded on three different shapes are compiled in FIG. 20. All peaks can be readily assigned to the

(111), (200) and (220) planes of fcc gold. Comparison of the (111) and the (200) diffraction intensities reveals very interesting features that are intrinsically related to the shapes of the particles being examined. For the gold nanocube sample, the intensity ratio between the (200) and the (111) diffractions is 1.93, which is significantly larger than the conventional bulk intensity ratio (~0.53). This is a clear indication that the faces of these nanocubes, primarily composed of {100} planes, tend to preferentially orient parallel to the supporting substrates, giving significantly high (200) diffraction intensity. On the other hand, the intensity ratios between the (200) and the (111) diffractions are much smaller than the bulk values for the tetrahedron and icosahedron samples, being 0.25 and 0.31, respectively. This again indicates that for tetrahedron and icosahedron samples, the {111} family of planes are dominant. This set of XRD patterns unambiguously demonstrates our capability of synthesizing with a high degree of selectivity, gold nanoparticles of different Platonic shapes.

[00135] The optical properties of metal nanoparticles are highly dependent on the size and shape of the particles. This has been extensively explored both theoretically and experimentally on several systems including gold nanorods, silver nanorods, prisms, and cubes. Several groups have theoretically simulated the optical properties of metal nanoparticles with arbitrary shapes and found distinctive shape-dependent behaviors. UV-VIS spectra collected on the ethylene glycol (EG) solutions of these three different shapes are compiled in FIG. 21. It was found that gold nanoparticles of different shapes clearly displayed different surface plasmon resonance, 621 nm for the nanocubes, 626, 950 nm for the tetrahedra and 613, 950 nm for icosahedra. The spectral features of the nanocube and tetrahedron are fairly consistent with previous theoretical simulations. The UV-VIS spectrum of the icosahedron nanoparticles resembles that of spherical nanoparticles of similar size. The additional broad, near IR peak, is most likely the result of co-existing triangular particles.

[00136] It is commonly accepted that the shape of an fcc nanocrystal is mainly determined by the ratio (R) between the growth rate along <100> and <111>

direction. Tetrahedra and icosahedra bounded by the most stable {111} planes will be formed when R is large (~1.73), and perfect cubes bounded by the less stable {100} planes will result if R is reduced (~0.58). The surface regulating polymer (PVP) and the introduction of foreign ions are believed to play the key roles here. Selective interaction between PVP and the different surface planes of the gold nanocrystals could greatly enhance the growth rate along the <100> direction, reduce the growth rate along <111> direction, and ultimately result in particles with tetrahedral or icosahedral shapes. The mechanism for the selective growth of icosahedral nanoparticles vs. tetrahedral ones is yet to be determined. The fact that lower overall gold precursor concentration (with otherwise identical synthetic conditions) results in selective icosahedron growth suggests that subtle differences in the gold embryonic seed formation and their subsequent growth might lead to this shape selection.

15 [00137] Offering another means of shape control, the introduction of foreign ions could greatly influence the relative growth rates along certain directions. We believe that the introduction of silver ions in the current process can significantly reduce the growth rate along the <100> direction and/or enhance the growth rate along the <111> direction, and ultimately particles with cube shapes result. There have been previous studies where the introduction of silver impurity during gold particle formation resulted in the control of the nanocrystal shape. For example, silver ions were used to control the aspect ratio of the gold nanorods produced via electrochemistry and photochemistry. It is also interesting to note that our shape control scheme is vastly different 20 from what has been reported by other researchers in the silver system, where PVP interaction promotes the nanocube formation. This could be the result of different interfacial interaction with polymer between the gold and silver systems.

25 [00138] The successful preparation of gold Platonic nanocrystals exemplifies the exquisite shape control that can be achieved through careful growth rate regulation along different crystallographic directions, and demonstrates a strategy that could be generally applicable to other material systems. These 30

Platonic nanocrystals have perfect symmetry for 2- and 3-dimensional packing, and therefore, could lead to interesting research on nano-tectonics, the formation of high-order nano-/microstructures, and finally, the rational tuning of optical, electrical, and catalytic properties.

5 [00139] For a typical tetrahedron synthesis, 5 ml of ethylene glycol (EG) was boiled in a silicone oil bath at 280 °C under reflux while stirring with a magnetic bar. Nitrogen was continuously flowed through the entire refluxing system. Solutions of 0.375 M PVP in EG, and 0.083 M HAuCl₄·3H₂O in EG were prepared. The PVP solution was injected to 5 ml of boiling EG, using a micropipette, and then the HAuCl₄ solution was injected twice. This process was repeated 15 more times for every 30 seconds. The solution turned red within 8 minutes after the injection, indicating formation of gold nanoparticles. The solution was aged for 45 minutes to ensure that the reaction was complete. The solution was collected, and the large aggregates and unreacted salts were removed by centrifugation. The solution was centrifuged at 1,000 rpm for 5 minutes and the precipitate was removed. After repeating this 3 times, the solution was centrifuged at 3,500 rpm for 30 minutes. The precipitate was collected and redispersed in 4 ml of EG.

10 15 [00140] For the synthesis of icosahedra, the gold precursor concentration was reduced to 4/5 of that used in the synthesis of tetrahedra under otherwise similar conditions.

[00141] For the synthesis of nanocubes, 0.5 ml of 0.0059 M silver nitrate (AgNO₃) solution in EG was first added to the boiling EG 5 minutes before the injection of gold precursor and PVP.

20 25 [00142] Typically, for the icosahedral and tetrahedral particle syntheses, the solution turns from light pink-orange to strong rust-red 7 minutes after the injection is finished. When diluted, the solution becomes iridescently blue. For the cube synthesis, the reaction solution shows a similar color change around 4 minutes after the injection is finished.

30 [00143] EXAMPLE 9

[00144] *Ag-Assisted Shape Control of Pt Nanocrystals*

[00145] Metal nanocrystals with precisely controlled shape exhibit unique

optical, magnetic, and catalytic properties. There have been extensive studies on approaches to control size and shape of the metal nanoparticles, and most of the methods developed thus far can be categorized as either reduction or decomposition of the metal precursors in the presence of organic capping reagents in solution. Cetyltrimethyl ammonium bromide (CTAB) and poly(vinylpyrrolidone) (PVP) have been widely used as regulating agents for the selective growth of nanocrystals with well-defined shapes such as rods, prisms, and cubes. However, exact binding nature between these capping reagents and the specific crystallographic planes is still ambiguous, and there are no generalized mechanisms interpreting various metal nanocrystal shape control experiments.

[00146] Many researchers have tried to make different shapes of the Pt particles in order to investigate their influence on catalytic activity. Herein we report the synthesis of monodisperse Pt nanocrystals with various shapes such as cubes, cuboctahedra, and octahedra selectively in high yields. We found that silver ion (or AgCl) enhances the crystal growth rate along <100>, and essentially determines the shape and surface structure of the Pt nanocrystals. This process may be applicable for other metal and semiconductor nanostructures, and may provide insights for a general mechanism on morphology control of nanocrystals.

[00147] In a typical synthesis, 0.5 mL of AgNO₃ solution in ethylene glycol (EG) was added to the boiling EG. EG solutions of PVP (93.8 μL of 0.375 M) and dihydrogen hexachloroplatinate (H₂PtCl₆·6H₂O, 46.9 μL of 0.0625 M) were added to the mixture every 30 sec over 16 min. The color of the solution immediately changed to dark brown indicating the fast reduction of Pt(IV) to Pt(0) species. The solution was refluxed for additional 5 min. Without adding Ag ions, the particles were obtained as a mixture of different shapes. However, when 1.1 mol % of AgNO₃ (with respect to the Pt concentration) was introduced to the solution, Pt cubes (~80%) were dominant products with a small amount of tetrahedra (~10%). Transmission electron microscopy (TEM) image (FIG. 22A) shows that the Pt cubes are homogeneous in shape with a narrow size distribution (face-to-face: 7.12±0.58 nm, vertex-to-vertex:

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9.37±0.61 nm). High resolution TEM (HRTEM) image (FIG. 22B) demonstrates the exposed {100} surface of the cube oriented along the [001] zone axis. Distance between the adjacent lattice fringes is 1.96 Å, in good agreement with the interplanar distance of the (200) plain in the face-centered cubic (fcc) Pt structure. FIG. 22C shows a triangular projection of the minor tetrahedral particles along the [111] direction, in which all side faces are covered with {111} planes.

[00148]

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Increasing the AgNO₃ concentration to 11 mol % changes the morphology of the Pt particles. Mostly faceted particles were obtained, including hexagons as the majority (FIG. 23A). The Pt nanocrystals are monodisperse with the largest vertex-to-vertex distance of 9.06±0.62 nm. FIG. 23B is a representative HRTEM image of the hexagon, and clearly shows the lattice fringe image of {111} planes with the interplanar distance of 2.26 Å and the separation angle of 70°, consistent with the hexagonal projection of ideal cuboctahedron along the [110] zone axis (FIG. 23C). In this projection, four {111} and two {100} facets are placed on the edges of the hexagonal shape.

[00149]

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At higher concentration of AgNO₃ up to 32 mol %, the resulting Pt nanocrystals are dominated by diamond and square shaped particles (~65%) as well as tetrahedra (~17%) (FIG. 24A). The average vertex-to-vertex distance of the major particles is 9.78±0.63 nm. FIG. 24B shows HRTEM image of a diamond shaped particle, which turns out to be the [110] oriented Pt octahedron. The square projections are not from the Pt cubes, but from the same octahedra oriented along the [001] zone axis. FIG. 24C exhibits four {111} facets edged on the Pt octahedron, while four {100} planes are located on the edges of the Pt cube along the same direction.

[00150]

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It is commonly believed that the final morphology of the fcc nanocrystals is dependent upon the R value, defined as the relative growth rate along the <100> direction to that of the <111>. As the concentration of Ag ion increases in the reaction mixture, the majority of the Pt particles changes from the cubes (R = 0.58) to the cuboctahedra (R = 0.87), and eventually to the octahedra (R = 1.73). It reveals that introduction of Ag ion enhances the growth along <100>, and/or suppresses the growth along

<111>. Controlled experiments were carried out to support this reaction mechanism. It was found that Ag ions were reduced into Ag clusters at EG reflux without PtCl_6^{2-} . In the presence of Cl^- , white AgCl colloids were immediately formed, but also reduced into Ag clusters under the same condition. The reduced silver clusters/species seem to be preferentially adsorbed on more active {100} surfaces of the Pt nuclei than {111} facets during the reaction. Note that the desorption energy of Ag on Pt(100) single crystalline surface is higher than that on Pt(111) in the Ag monolayer film growth, indicating the relative stability of Ag(0) on the Pt{100} surface. When the Pt precursors were continuously added, the Pt salts were reduced spontaneously with oxidation of the adsorbed Ag species on the {100} surface by favorable electrochemical reaction ($4\text{Ag} + \text{H}_2\text{PtCl}_6 \rightarrow 4\text{AgCl} + \text{Pt}(0) + 2\text{HCl}$), and subsequently the growth rate along the <100> direction was enhanced with the dissolution of AgCl into solvent. As a result, silver atoms will not be incorporated into the nanocrystal lattice. Actually, there are no detectable silver signals in all the Pt nanocrystals in this study checked either by X-ray diffraction (XRD) or energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDS) after simple purification.

[00151] Other conditions such as reaction temperature and addition rate of the reactants are also important to make uniform Pt nanocrystals. For instance, smaller Pt particles were generated with the size of 3.73 ± 0.39 nm at 160°C under otherwise same reaction condition. On the other hand, slow addition of the PVP and Pt salt solutions over 30 min led to polycrystalline particles larger than 13 nm.

[00152] It is interesting to point out that previously reported gold nanorod synthesis by photochemical and electrochemical methods may follow this analogous mechanism. Introducing Ag ions enhances the <100> directional growth, and subsequently controls the aspect ratio of the nanorods. We believe that this process can be expanded to other metal and semiconductor systems using various foreign ions as shape control agents.

[00153] Nanoparticles of different shape exhibit intrinsically different surface structures. Considering the ideal models, the cube has only {100} faces, and

the octahedron and tetrahedron display only {111} surfaces. In the cuboctahedron, the surface is composed of six {100} and eight {111} planes with a relative area of 1:0.577. Accordingly, surface dependent properties such as catalytic reactivity can be modified rationally by manipulating the shape of the particles with a variation of added silver ions.

5 [00154] FIG. 25 is a generalization of the modified polyol process described above.

[00155] In conclusion, monodisperse Pt nanocrystals with various shapes including cubes, cuboctahedra, and octahedra have been synthesized 10 selectively by a modified polyol process. The addition of silver ion was found to enhance the crystal growth rate along <100>, and essentially determines the shape and surface structure of the Pt nanocrystals. This process may be applicable to other metal and semiconductor systems using various foreign ions as shape control agents. We also expect that the surface dependent 15 properties such as catalytic reactivity can be regulated rationally by manipulating the shape of these particles. Therefore, the Ag ion plays an important role to control the shape and surface structure of the Pt nanocrystals.

[00156] EXAMPLE 10

20 [00157] *Nanocrystal Lithography Using Langmuir-Blodgett Technique*

[00158] The integration density of microelectronic devices on a silicon-based chip exhibits phenomenal rate of increase by rapid development of optical lithography. Recent progress of lithographic techniques can commercialize the 25 microprocessors with feature size of ~100 nm in a high yield. However, these "top-down" approaches based on photolithography have a fundamental limit on the minimum length scale that can be ultimately attained, and increase the cost exponentially to obtain higher resolutions. Shorter wavelength light sources such as extreme ultraviolet and X-ray were introduced and regarded as strong candidates for achieving dimensions of several tens of nanometers. Although electron beam lithography is one of the most powerful tools for high-resolution capabilities less than 10 nm, it has critical problems of low throughput and slow processing speed. Alternatively, new techniques without 30

using optical sources have been devised and applied for fabrication. Dip-pen lithography based on scanning probe microscopy can transfer various materials to the nanosized patterns, and nanoimprint technique provides a simple, low cost, and high-resolution fabrication down to ~10 nm. But no obvious successor to the current lithographic techniques has emerged yet.

5 [00159] On the other hand, nanoscale materials including quantum dots and nanowires are of massive interest in unique physical properties due to their low dimensionality. Considerable efforts have been focused on the synthesis and fabrication of the devices using individual nano-objects. If these 10 nanoscale building blocks can be organized hierarchically into well-designed patterns, they will offer many important applications from nanoscale electronics and optoelectronics to molecular sensing. Microfluidic and electrical methods were partially successful to guide the low dimensional materials into the functional networks such as 3×4 crossed arrays. But there 15 are crucial challenges of these "bottom-up" approaches such as the limit of scalability and extremely high error rate of assembly. Even if all problems can be completely resolved, the application for real industrial production may not be possible in the near future due to the high expense of changing entire process built on silicon microelectronics.

20 [00160] Advances in "top-down" lithography and "bottom-up" self-assembly techniques seem to merge with each other in terms of the nanoscale size range (10 ~ 100 nm). What if two opposite strategies combine synergistically in the same process? Simple synthetic schemes of the nanoscopic materials 25 in a bottom-up approach can reduce rather sophisticated multistep deposition-etch processes in top-down lithographic techniques, and high reliability of top-down approach may be able to compensate repetitive production of the registered structures from bottom-up synthesis. Most of all, newly developed patterning skills can directly be employed to the current silicon-based manufacturing process. Two intriguing techniques have been reported thus far 30 along this line. The self-assembled structures of block copolymer were transferred to the silicon nitride-coated substrate by reactive ion etching (block copolymer lithography). Close-packed layers of silica spheres have also been

used as a mask for patterning metal nanoparticle arrays (nanosphere lithography). Both are inexpensive, simple, and high throughput techniques generating nanometer scale structures, but have limitations to make various shapes and arrays in the controlled positions by spontaneous self-assembly.

5 [00161] For developing more versatile self-assembled structures, we have suggested Langmuir-Blodgett (LB) technique for the assembly of low dimensional materials including nanoparticles, nanorods, and nanowires. Originally, the Langmuir-Blodgett technique has been developed for preparing mono- and multilayers of fatty acids and many other amphiphilic molecules
10 that can be floated on the surface of water. It has been used extensively in the preparation of monolayers for molecular electronics, and more recently to create nanocrystal monolayers with tunable electronic and optical properties. Now it has been figured out that any materials in the nanoscale regime from a few to several hundreds of nanometer can be assembled to the close-packed
15 monolayer by the same technique. The nanoscale materials were functionalized by hydrophobic ligands and dispersed onto a water surface of the Langmuir-Blodgett trough. Then the floating materials were compressed to high density on the surface by precise control of mobile barriers. This assembly process is a microscopic version of "logs-on-a-river". The
20 compressed monolayer can be transferred onto any substrates such as silicon wafers or plastic substances.

[00162] There are several advantages of Langmuir-Blodgett assembly compared to the aforementioned techniques. First, any materials in a wide range of size can be deposited onto various substrates. There are huge amount of nanostructures from tiny nanoparticles less than 1 nm to nanowires up to \square m scale in length. Second, the interspacing of nanoparticles and the pitch of nanowires can be rationally controlled through the compression process. This is important if the nanoscale materials are integrated into the high-density devices. Third, Langmuir-Blodgett assembly is a one-step and fast process, and technically has no limits of the area that can be obtained.
25 The aligned area is limited only by the amount of initial materials used, and the sized of a trough area. Fourth, it is possible to transfer monolayers, layer
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by layer, to form parallel and crossed-nanowire structures for active device components.

[00163] Using the arrays of well-defined nanoscale materials by LB experiment, we have developed a new lithographic technique which we refer to as "nanocrystal lithography"; that is, nanocrystal arrays as direct patterns, masks, and molds for various lithographic skills to achieve sub-10 nm resolutions. This approach is a synergetic combination of the "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches, and superior to the previous techniques in terms of smaller feature size and better control. The objects for nanocrystal lithography are nanosized materials made by bottom-up approaches such as solution-based and gas phase syntheses. The Langmuir-Blodgett technique can be applied to the nanoscale objects for making uniform and directional alignments with controlled density and pitch, and the resulting arrays are deposited on the various substrates. By the kind of "top-down" lithographic techniques, we can specify nanocrystal lithography as the following: (a) direct patterning, (b) nanocrystal mask, and (c) nanocrystal imprint.

[00164] *Direct Patterning of Nanocrystal Arrays*

[00165] Langmuir-Blodgett monolayers can be directly deposited onto the patterned substrates, or on the flat substances followed by lithographic treatments. For example, Pt dot arrays on silica substrates can be regarded as 2-dimensional model catalysts to address various reactions on the surface. Electron beam lithography was used for generating the Pt nanoparticles with 30 nm diameters and 100 nm periodicity as the maximum resolution. We have fabricated the same arrays of monodisperse Pt nanocubes with 7 nm diameters on a silicon substrate by LB method, and the resulting density of Pt surfaces was estimated as 50 times larger than that obtained by corresponding "top-down" process.

[00166] The LB technique is able to control the directionality and density of nanocrystals. But if the positional control of each object is possible, the nanoscale materials can be directly incorporated into the silicon-based device structures, and enable the fabrication of integrated nanosystems with current technology. For this purpose, we consider additional driving forces such as

chemical, magnetic, and electronic fluxes as well as applying secondary perpendicular surface pressure to be relevant.

[00167] *Patterning Through Nanocrystal Masks*

[00168] Closed packed nanoparticles and nanowires can serve as shadow

5 masks to create nanoscale arrays. The deposited patterns are mainly defined by the size and spacing of the nanocrystals used in the masks. We suggest that addition of organic surfactants can tune the pitch of the nanowire masks more accurately. The organic residues are removed by O₂ plasma treatment. Nanosphere lithography is also classified in this category with the feature size 10 of 20--1000 nm range. Additionally, patterning through these nanocrystal masks is expected to generate unique nanoscale structures of metal and other materials on the substrates, as well as to make different alignment of nanostructures.

[00169] *Nanocrystal Imprint*

[00170] Nanoimprint lithography attracts much attention due to their high throughput with easy operation at a low cost. We propose the nanocrystal arrays as original patterns. The 2-dimensional superlattice structure of nanocrystals is transferred to the polymer such as PDMS (poly(dimethylsiloxane)) or thin Si substrates. Dense SiO₂ layers are deposited 20 on top of it by either sputtering or low pressure chemical vapor deposition. The SiO₂ replica of the nanocrystals is fabricated by etching the substrates. The patterns are repetitively imprinted by the resulting SiO₂ stamps, followed by deposition of metal and metal oxide. The interesting point of this 25 nanocrystal imprint technique is that only the patterns of the nanocrystals are duplicated regardless of material composition. For example, monodisperse Pt nanorods synthesis has not been explored so far by solution-based technique, but the same Pt rod structures can be easily patterned by nanocrystal imprint using gold nanorod structures and subsequent Pt deposition.

[00171] Combination of the nanostructures with LB technique (a representative 30 of bottom-up approach) and optical and non-optical lithography (that of top-down approach) offers virtually any nanoscale materials into the highly integrated and hierarchically organized electronic devices based on current

microelectronics technology. If the nanoscale materials are easily handled in this way, the impact would be enormous in various fields, and diminish the period drastically for the high performance "nanoelectronic" devices into the real market.

5 [00172] Although the description above contains many details, these should not be construed as limiting the scope of the invention but as merely providing illustrations of some of the presently preferred embodiments of this invention. Therefore, it will be appreciated that the scope of the present invention fully encompasses other embodiments which may become obvious to those skilled 10 in the art. In the description and in the claims, reference to an element in the singular is not intended to mean "one and only one" unless explicitly so stated, but rather "one or more." All structural, chemical, and functional equivalents to the elements of the above-described preferred embodiment that are known to those of ordinary skill in the art are expressly incorporated 15 herein by reference and are intended to be encompassed by the present claims. Moreover, it is not necessary for a device or method to address each and every problem sought to be solved by the present invention, for it to be encompassed by the present claims. Furthermore, no element, component, or method step in the present disclosure is intended to be dedicated to the 20 public regardless of whether the element, component, or method step is explicitly recited in the claims. No claim element herein is to be construed under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph, unless the element is expressly recited using the phrase "means for."

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for fabricating a monolayer of nanostructures, comprising:
5 forming a plurality of nanostructures;
rendering said nanostructures hydrophobic;
dispersing said hydrophobic nanostructures onto a water surface of a
Langmuir-Blodgett trough and forming a monolayer film of ordered nanostructures;
and
10 compressing said monolayer film, wherein a compressed monolayer of said
nanostructures is formed.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:
transferring said compressed monolayer onto a substrate.

15 3. A method as recited in claim 2, wherein said substrate is selected from
the group consisting essentially of silicon wafers, glass slides, and polymer and other
substrates.

20 4. A method as recited in claim 2, wherein said monolayer and substrate
combination is configured as a surface enhanced Raman Spectroscopy substrate.

5. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising embedding said
compressed monolayer in polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS).

25 6. A method as recited in claim 4, further comprising configuring said
embedded monolayer as a simple wire-grid optical polarizer.

7. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:
30 forming said nanostructures with a controlled shape;
wherein said shape is selected from the group consisting essentially of cube-
shaped, plate-shaped, rod-shaped, triangle-shaped, pentagon-shaped and hexagon-

shaped.

8. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said compressed monolayer has an area greater than approximately 20 cm².

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9. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising configuring said compressed monolayer for molecular-specific sensing utilizing vibrational signatures.

10. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising configuring said compressed monolayer for use as a surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS) substrate for molecular sensing.

11. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising configuring said compressed monolayer for the detection of 2,4-dinitrotoluene (2,4-DENT).

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12. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising configuring said compressed monolayer as a sensor.

13. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising configuring said compressed monolayer as an interconnect.

14. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising placing said compressed monolayer in a multilayer structure.

25 15. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising configuring said compressed monolayer for lithography.

16. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising assembling a plurality of said compressed monolayers.

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17. A monolayer structured fabricated according to the method recited in claim 1.

18. An assembly of compressed monolayers formed according to the method recited in claim 1.

5 20. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said nanostructures comprise nanowires.

21. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein said nanowires are ~ 50 nm in diameter.

10 22. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein said nanowires have pentagonal cross-sections.

15 23. A method as recited in claim 22, wherein said nanowires have pyramidal tips.

24. A method as recited in claim 23, wherein said pyramidal tips have vertices as sharp as 2 nm.

20 25. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein said nanowires are close-packed as parallel arrays with their longitudinal axes aligned perpendicular to the compression direction.

25 26. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said nanostructures are non-spherical.

27. A method for fabricating a monolayer of nanostructures, comprising:
forming a plurality of non-spherical nanostructures;
rendering said nanostructures hydrophobic;
30 dispersing said hydrophobic nanostructures onto a water surface of a Langmuir-Blodgett trough and forming a monolayer film of ordered nanostructures;
and

compressing said monolayer nanostructure film, wherein a compressed monolayer of said nanostructures is formed.

28. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising:

5 transferring said compressed monolayer onto a substrate.

29. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said substrate is selected from the group consisting essentially of silicon wafers, glass slides, and polymer and other substrates.

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30. A method as recited in claim 28, wherein said monolayer and substrate combination is configured as a surface enhanced Raman Spectroscopy substrate.

15 31. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising embedding said compressed monolayer in polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS).

32. A method as recited in claim 31, further comprising configuring said embedded monolayer as a simple wire-grid optical polarizer.

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33. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising:
forming said nanostructures with a controlled shape;
wherein said shape is selected from the group consisting essentially of cube-shaped, plate-shaped, rod-shaped, triangle-shaped, pentagon-shaped and hexagon-shaped.

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34. A method as recited in claim 27, wherein said compressed monolayer has an area greater than approximately 20 cm².

35. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising configuring said 30 compressed monolayer for molecular-specific sensing utilizing vibrational signatures.

36. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising configuring said

compressed monolayer for use as a surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS) substrate for molecular sensing.

37. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising configuring said
5 compressed monolayer for the detection of 2,4-dinitrotoluene (2,4-DENT).

38. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising configuring said compressed monolayer as a sensor.

10 39. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising configuring said compressed monolayer as an interconnect.

40. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising placing said compressed monolayer in a multilayer structure.

15 41. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising configuring said compressed monolayer for lithography.

42. A method as recited in claim 27, further comprising assembling a
20 plurality of said compressed monolayers.

43. A monolayer structured fabricated according to the method recited in claim 27.

25 44. An assembly of compressed monolayers formed according to the method recited in claim 27.

45. A method as recited in claim 27, wherein said nanostructures comprise nanowires.

30 46. A method as recited in claim 45, wherein said nanowires are ~ 50 nm in diameter.

47. A method as recited in claim 45, wherein said nanowires have pentagonal cross-sections.

5 48. A method as recited in claim 47, wherein said nanowires have pyramidal tips.

49. A method as recited in claim 48, wherein said pyramidal tips have vertices as sharp as 2 nm.

10 50. A method as recited in claim 45, wherein said nanowires are close-packed as parallel arrays with their longitudinal axes aligned perpendicular to the compression direction.

15 51. A method for fabricating monolayer of silver nanowires, comprising: forming silver nanowires using a solution-phase polyol process wherein said nanowires have faceted cross-sections;

rendering said nanowires hydrophobic.

dispersing said hydrophobic nanowires onto a water surface of a Langmuir-

20 Blodgett trough and forming a monolayer film of nanowires that exhibit substantial parallel alignment; and

compressing said monolayer nanowire film and forming a monolayer through an insulator-to-metal transition.

25 52. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising:
transferring said monolayer onto a substrate.

53. A method as recited in claim 52, wherein said substrate is selected from the group consisting essentially of silicon wafers, glass slides, and polymer and
30 other substrates.

54. A method as recited in claim 52, wherein said monolayer and substrate

combination is configured as a surface enhanced Raman Spectroscopy substrate.

5 55. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising embedding said monolayer in polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS).

10 56. A method as recited in claim 55, further comprising configuring said embedded monolayer as a simple wire-grid optical polarizer.

15 57. A method as recited in claim 51, wherein said monolayer has an area greater than approximately 20 cm².

20 58. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising configuring said monolayer for molecular-specific sensing utilizing vibrational signatures.

25 59. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising configuring said monolayer for use as a surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS) substrate for molecular sensing.

30 60. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising configuring said monolayer for the detection of 2,4-dinitrotoluene (2,4-DENT).

35 61. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising configuring said monolayer as a sensor.

40 62. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising configuring said monolayer as an interconnect.

45 63. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising placing said monolayer in a multilayer structure.

50 64. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising configuring said monolayer for lithography.

65. A method as recited in claim 51, further comprising assembling a plurality of said monolayers.

5 66. A monolayer structured fabricated according to the method recited in
claim 51.

67. An assembly of monolayers formed according to the method recited in
claim 51.

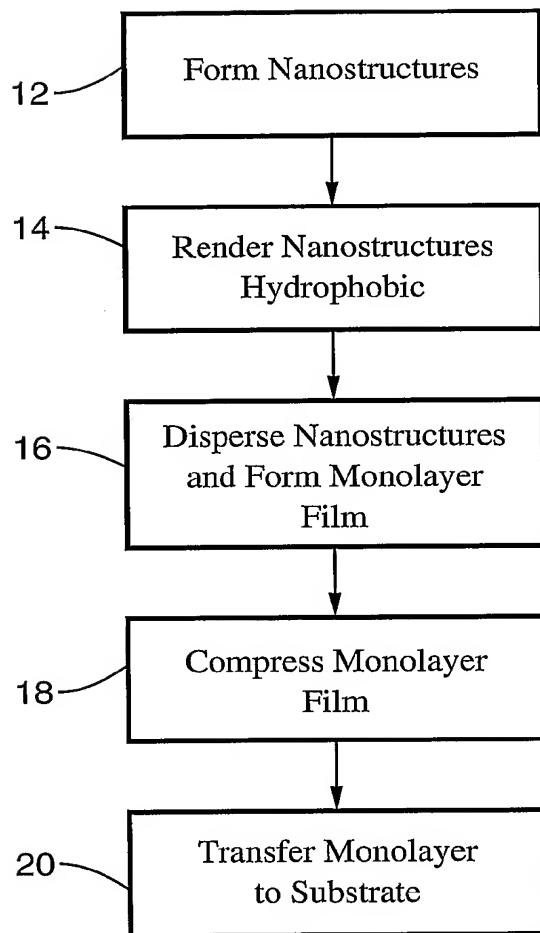
10 68. A method as recited in claim 51, wherein said nanowires are ~ 50 nm in
diameter.

15 69. A method as recited in claim 51, wherein said nanowires have
pentagonal cross-sections.

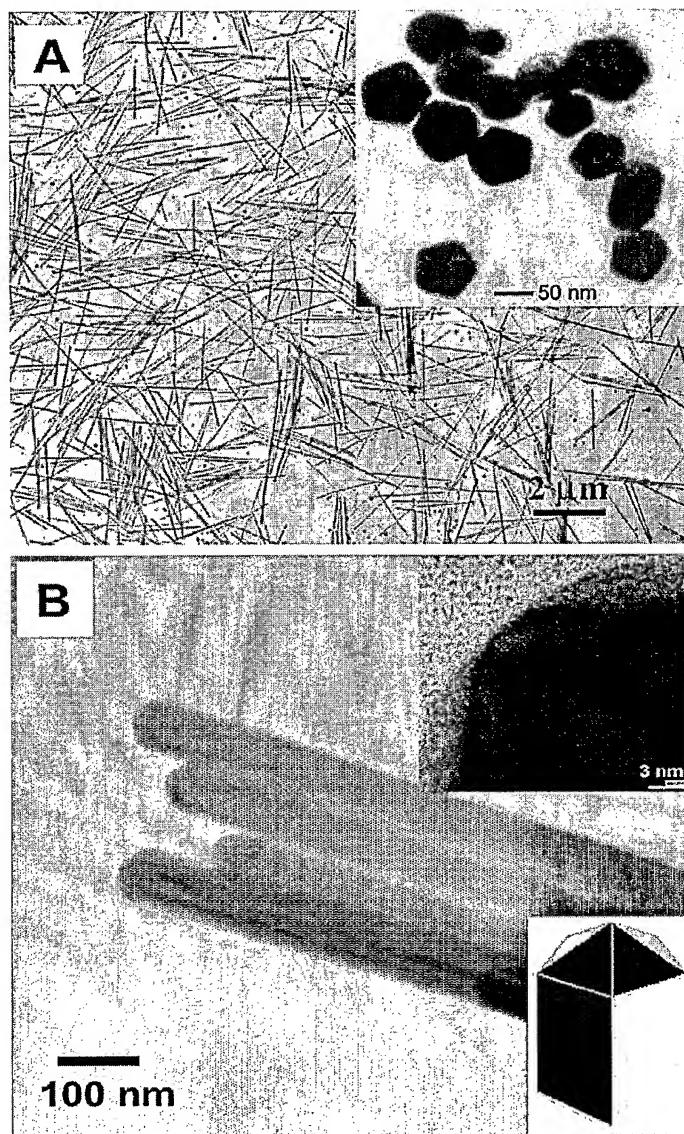
70. A method as recited in claim 69, wherein said nanowires have
pyramidal tips.

20 71. A method as recited in claim 70, wherein said pyramidal tips have
vertices as sharp as 2 nm.

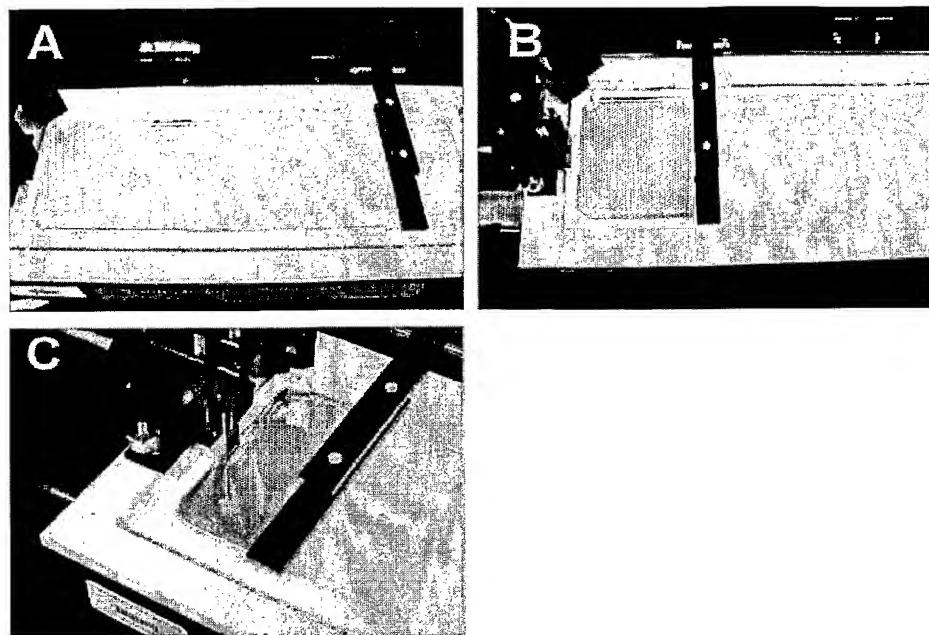
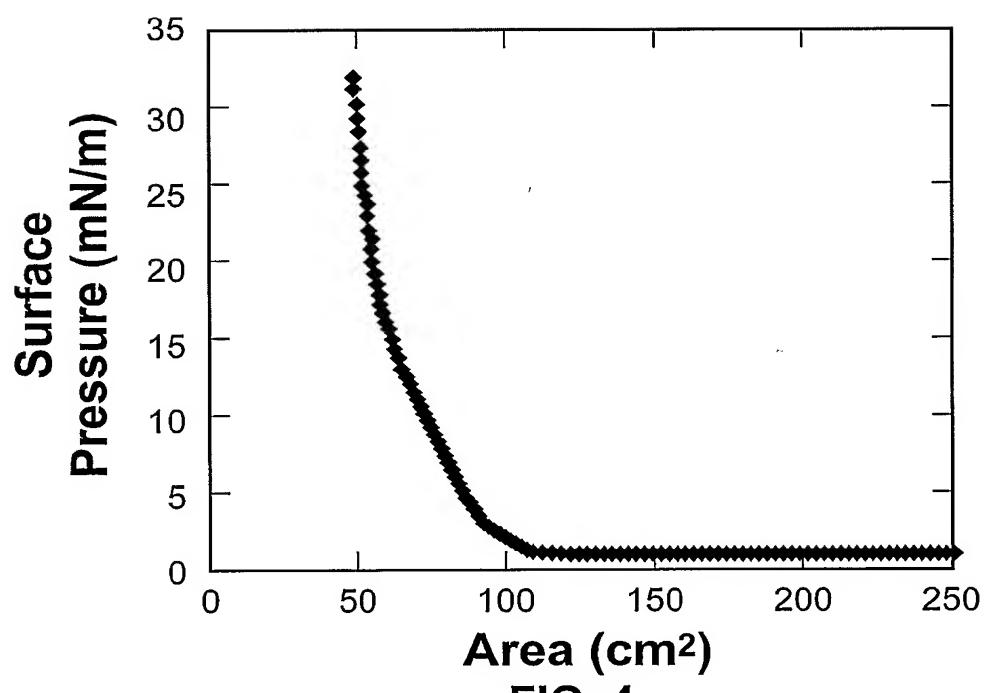
25 72. A method as recited in claim 51, wherein said nanowires are close-packed as parallel arrays with their longitudinal axes aligned perpendicular to the
compression direction.

**FIG. 1**

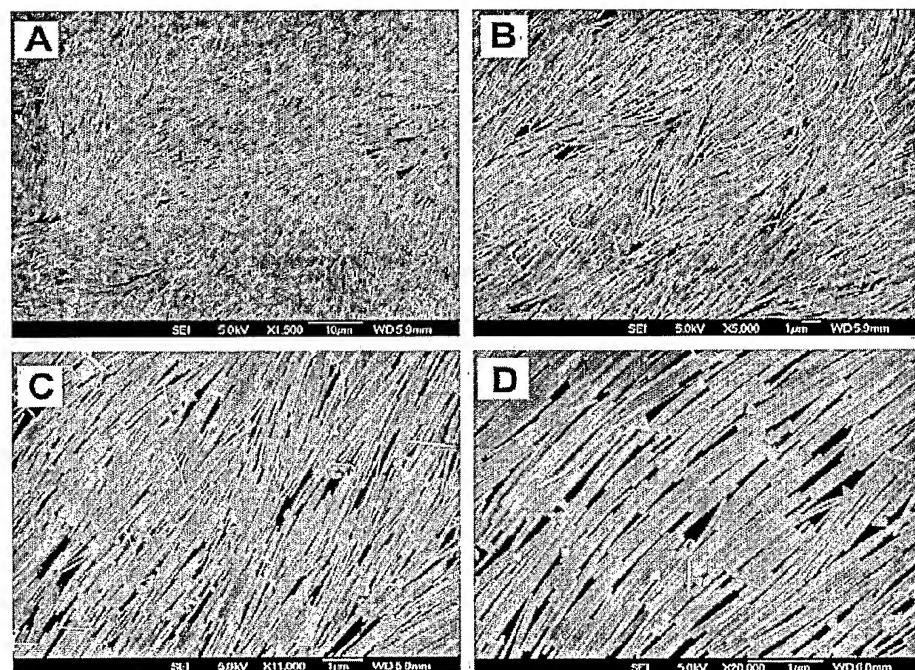
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**FIG. 2**

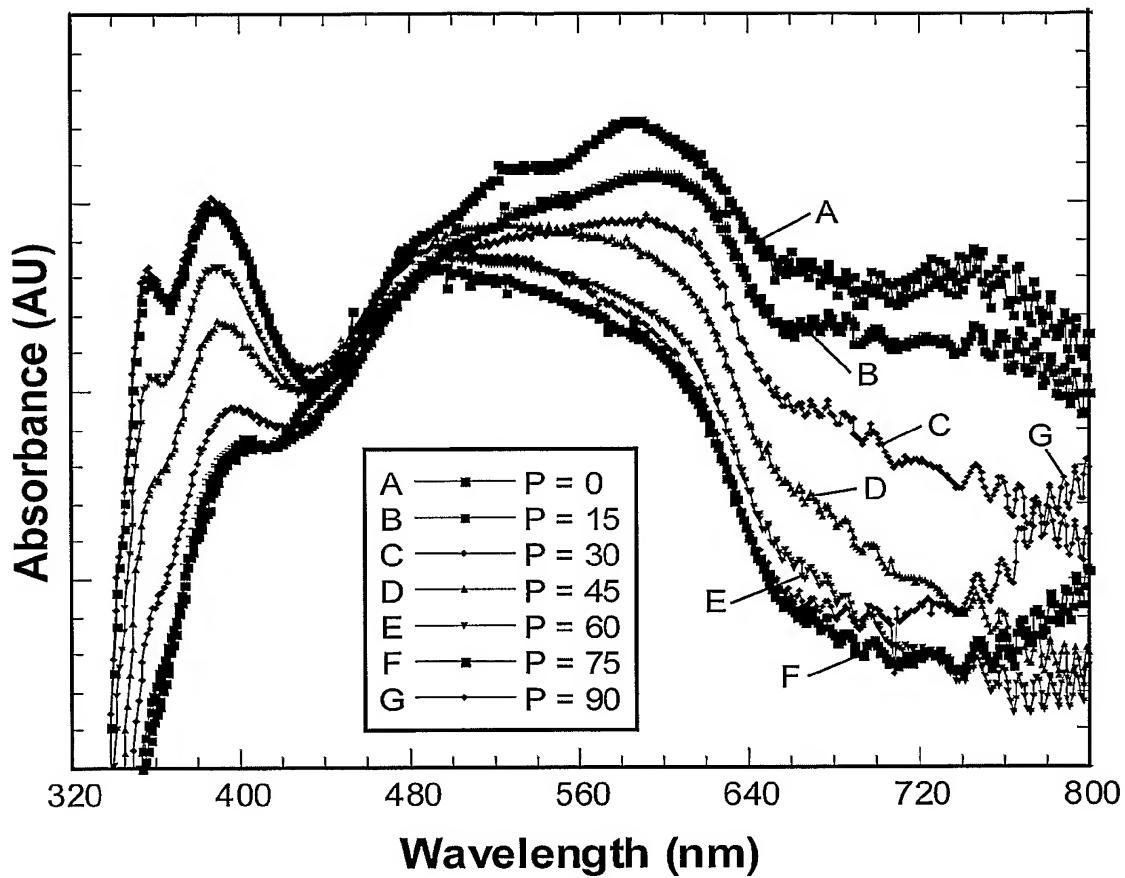
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**FIG. 3****FIG. 4**

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**FIG. 5**

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**FIG. 6**

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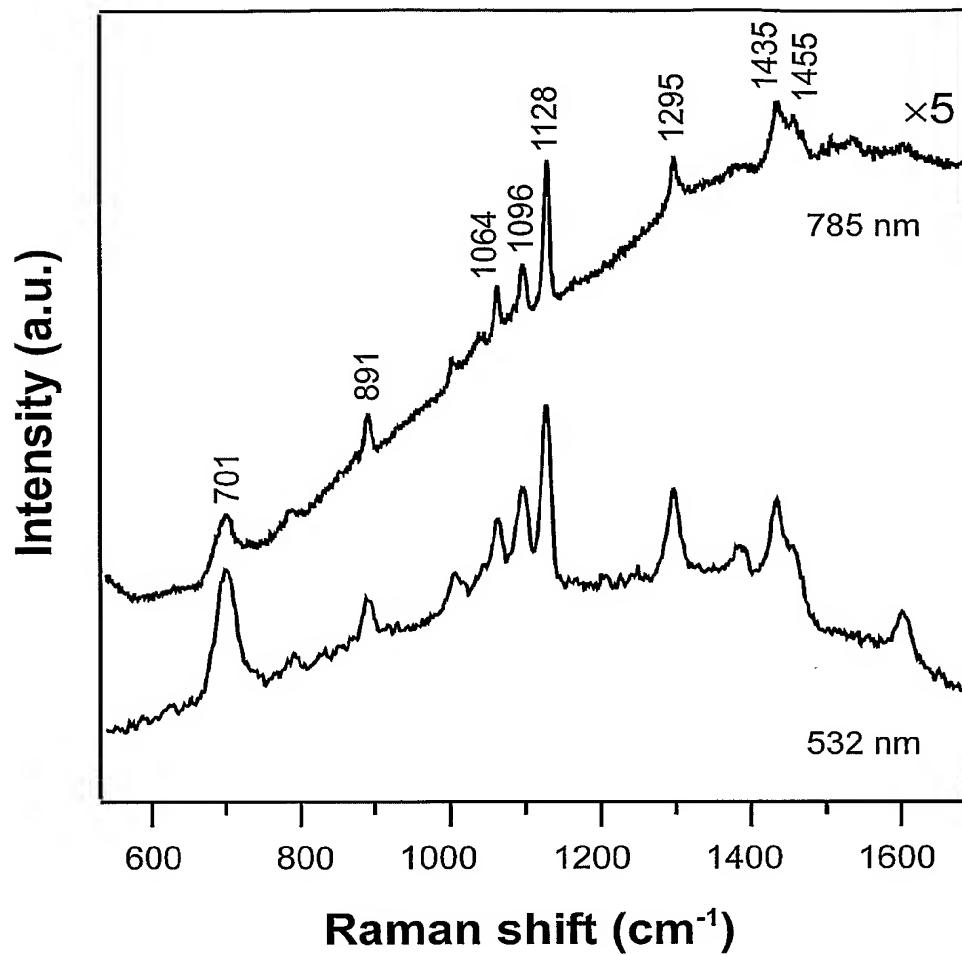


FIG. 7

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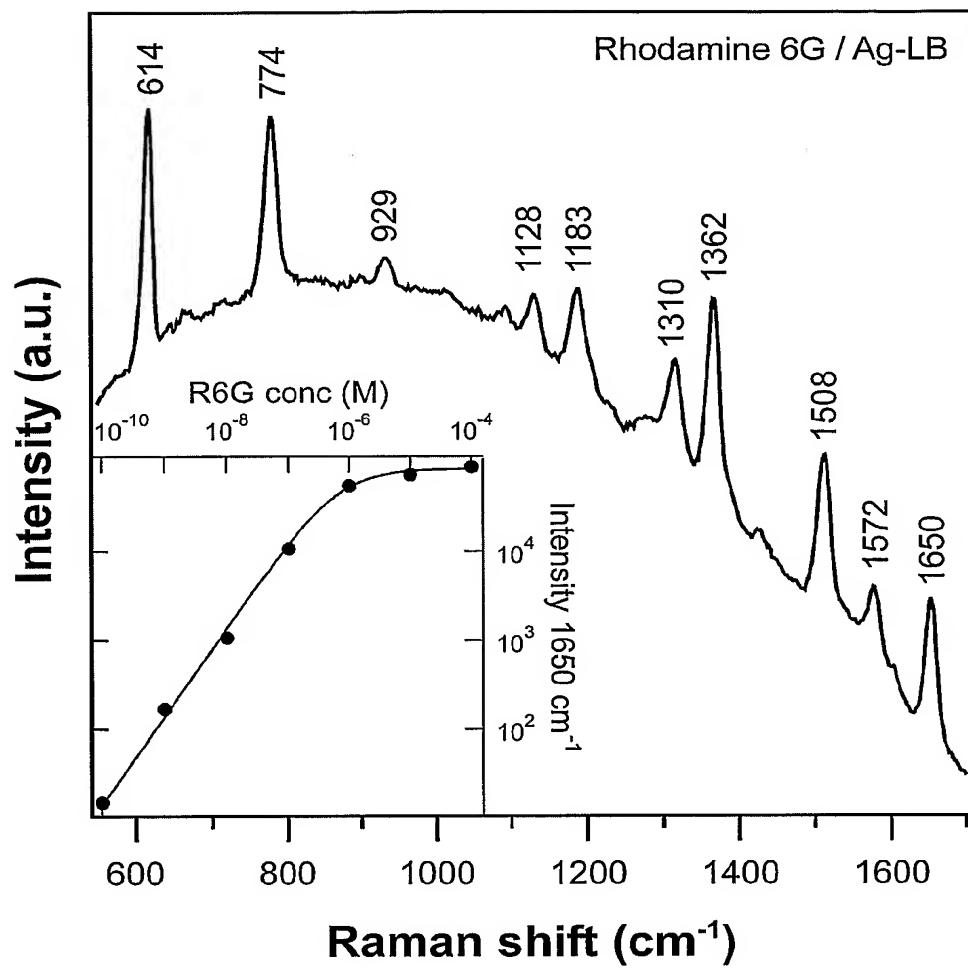
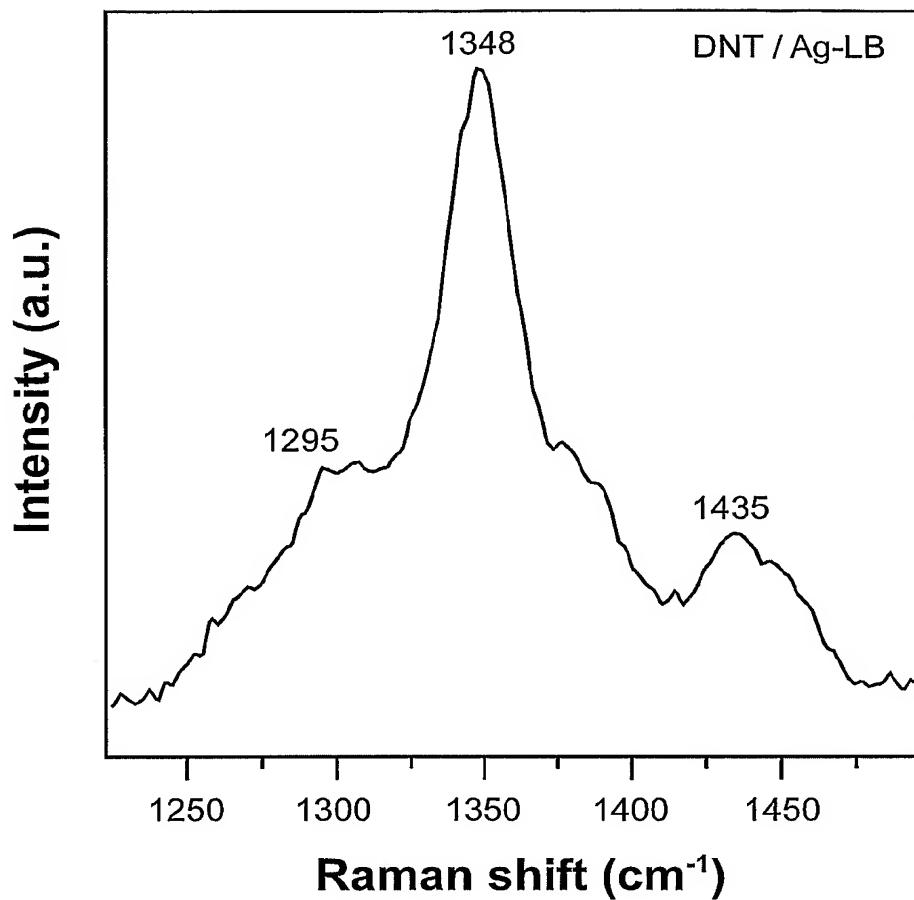


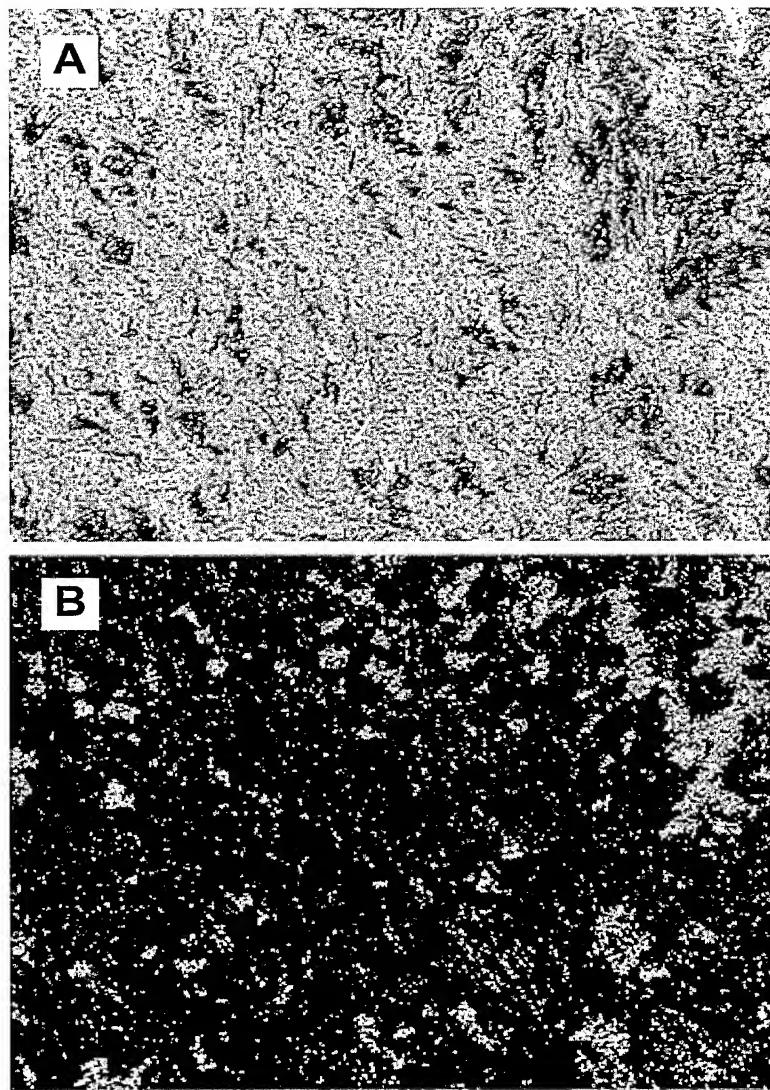
FIG. 8

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**FIG. 9**

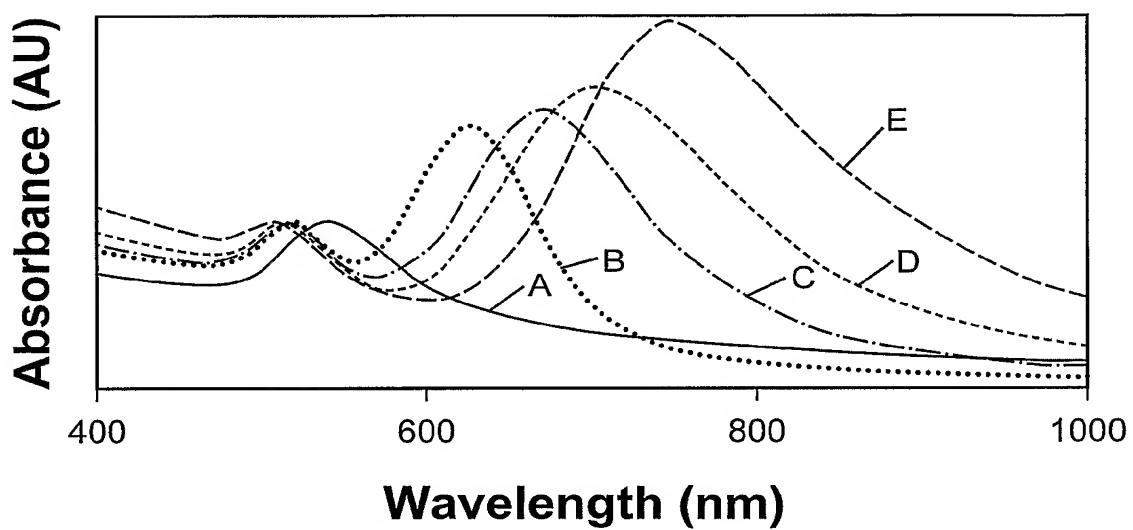
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**FIG. 10**

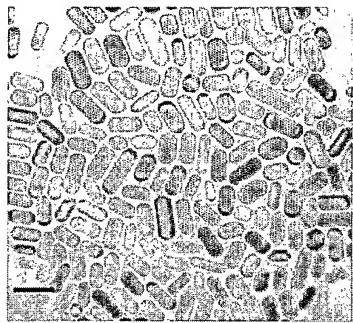
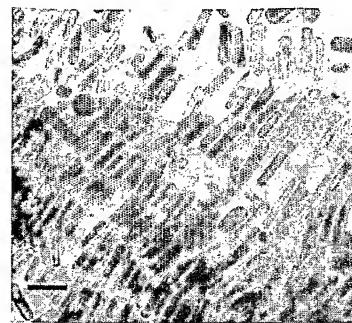
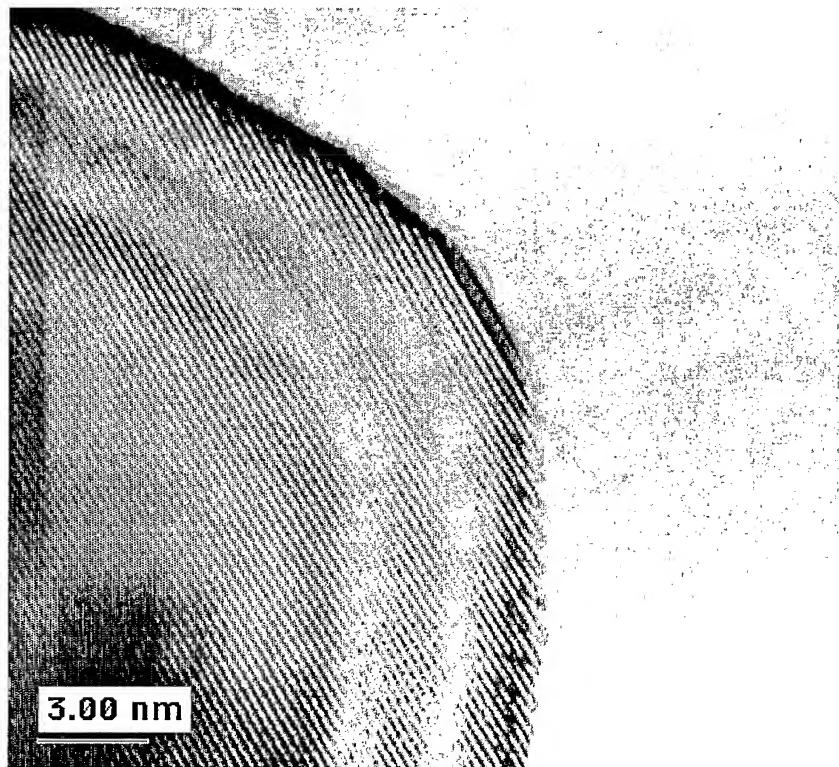
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**FIG. 11**

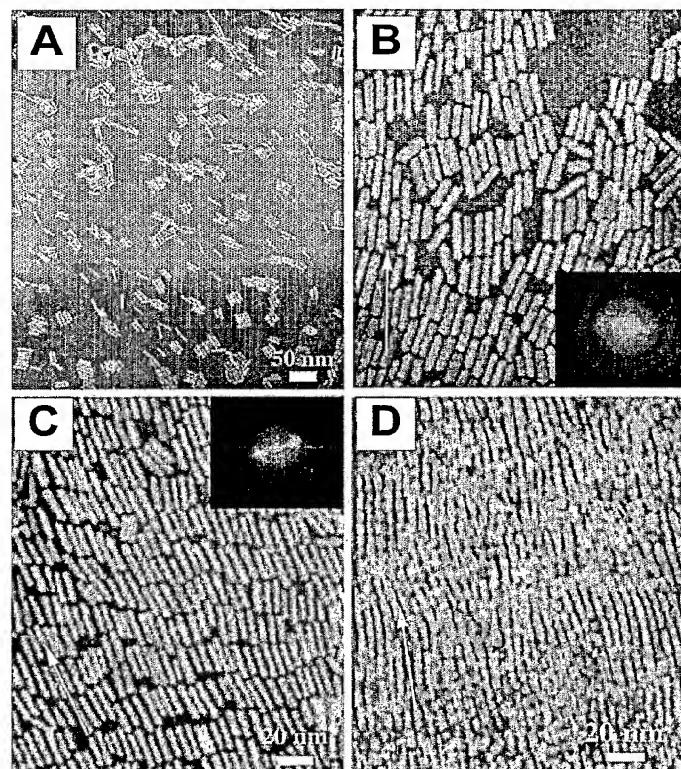
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**FIG. 12A****FIG. 12B****FIG. 12C****FIG. 13**

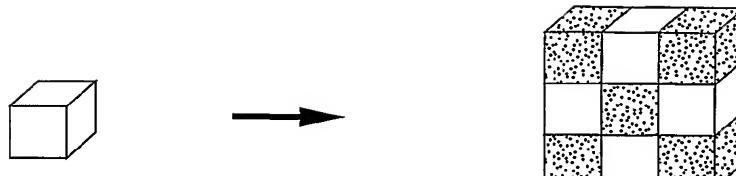
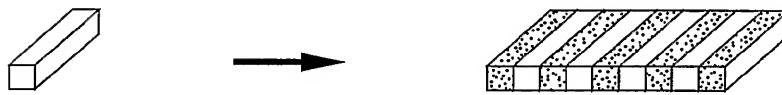
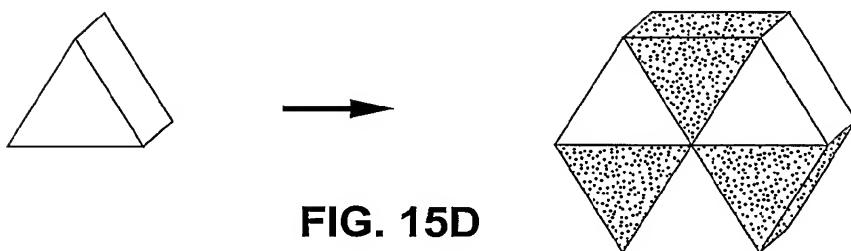
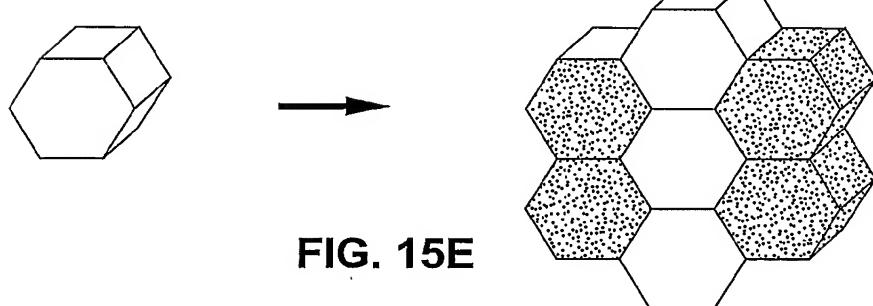
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**FIG. 14**

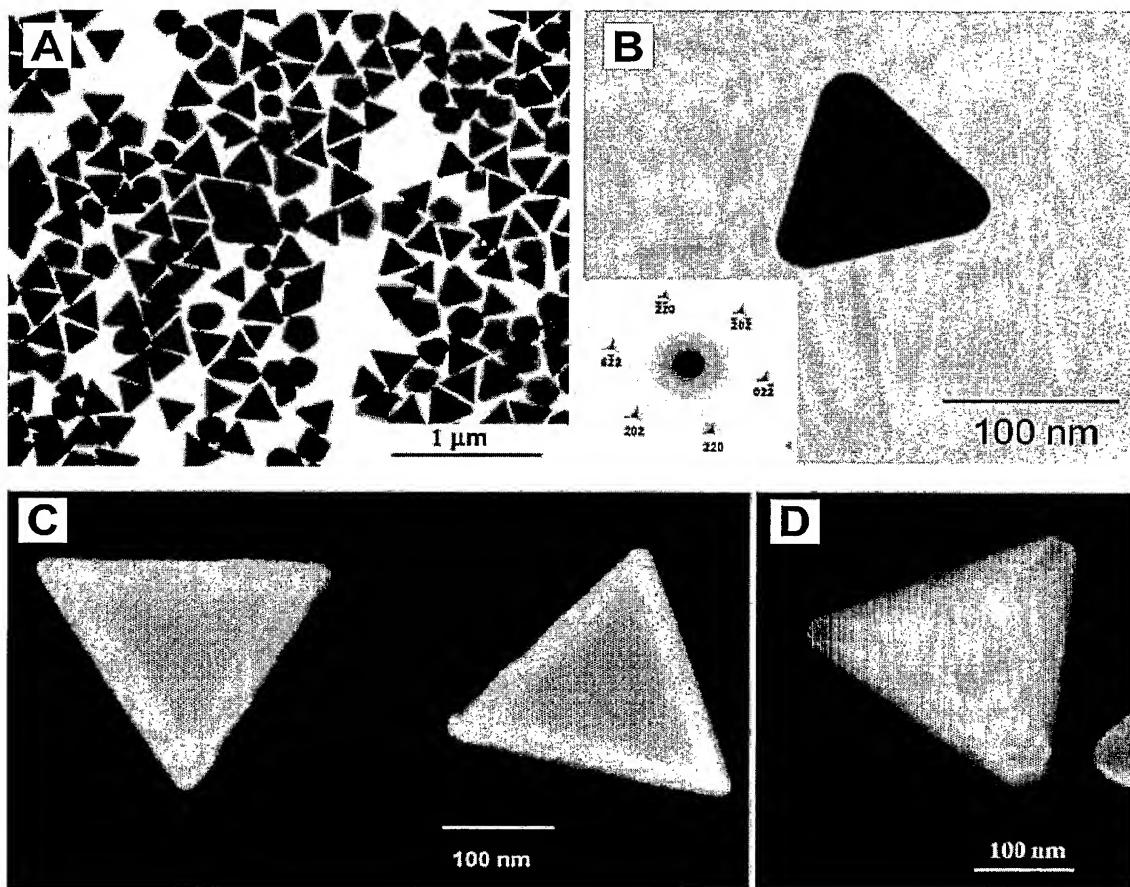
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**FIG. 15A****FIG. 15B****FIG. 15C****FIG. 15D****FIG. 15E**

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**FIG. 16**

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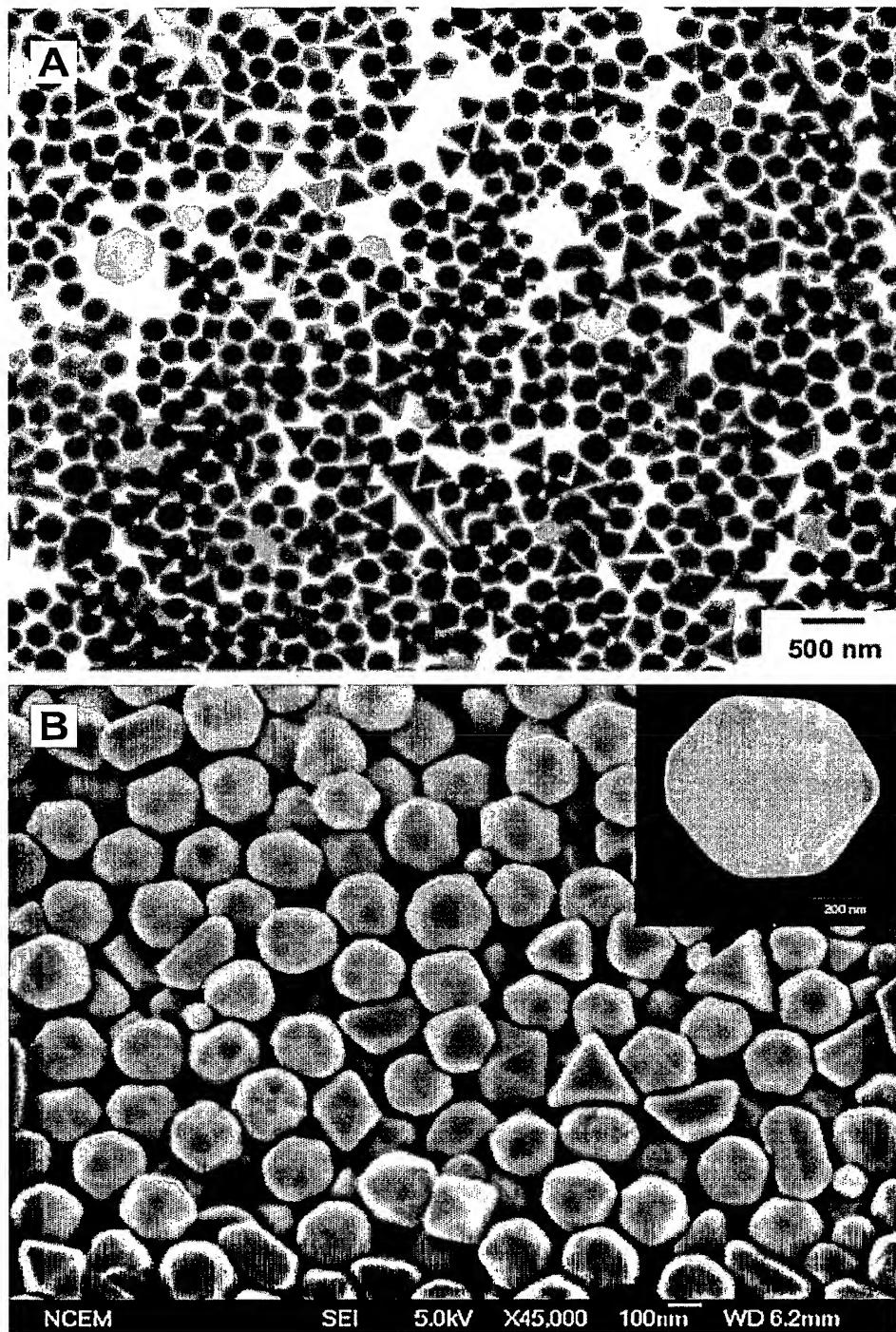
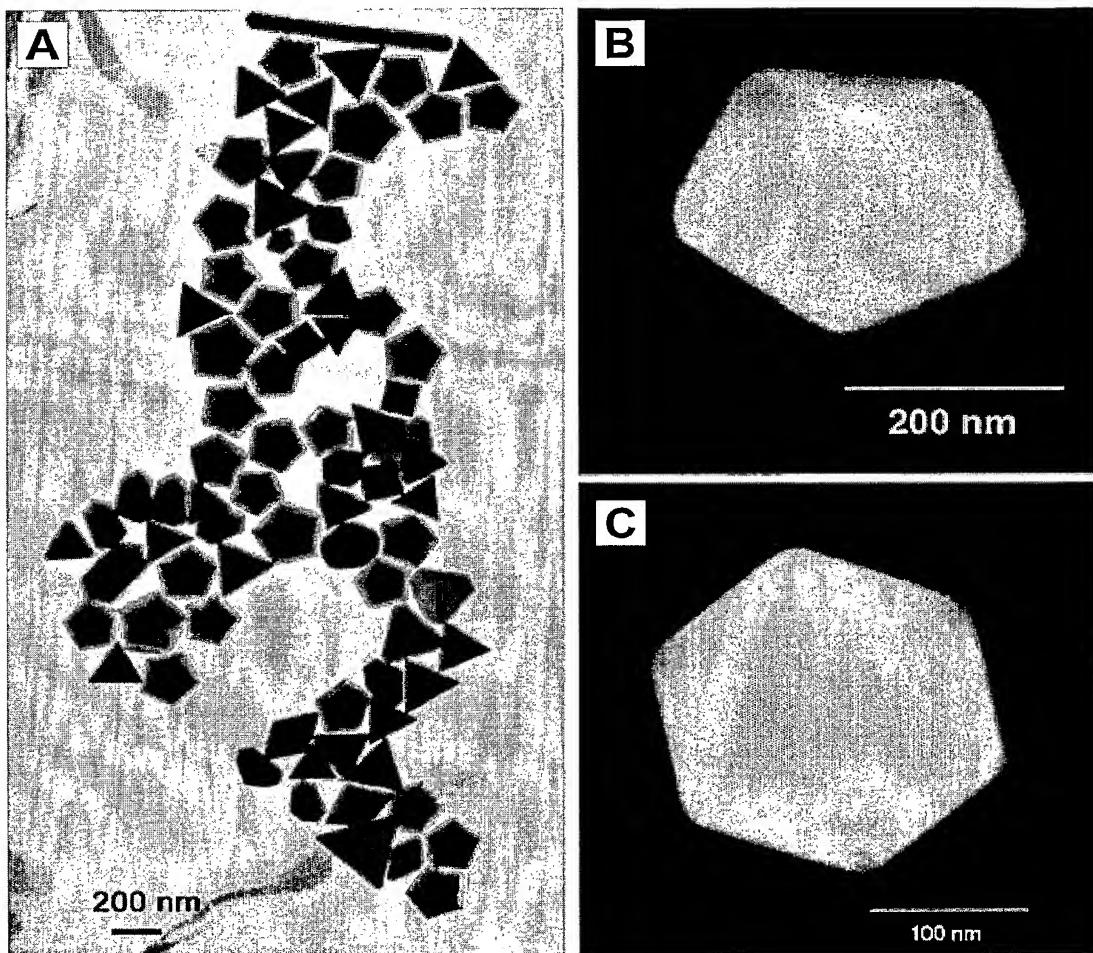


FIG. 17

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**FIG. 18**

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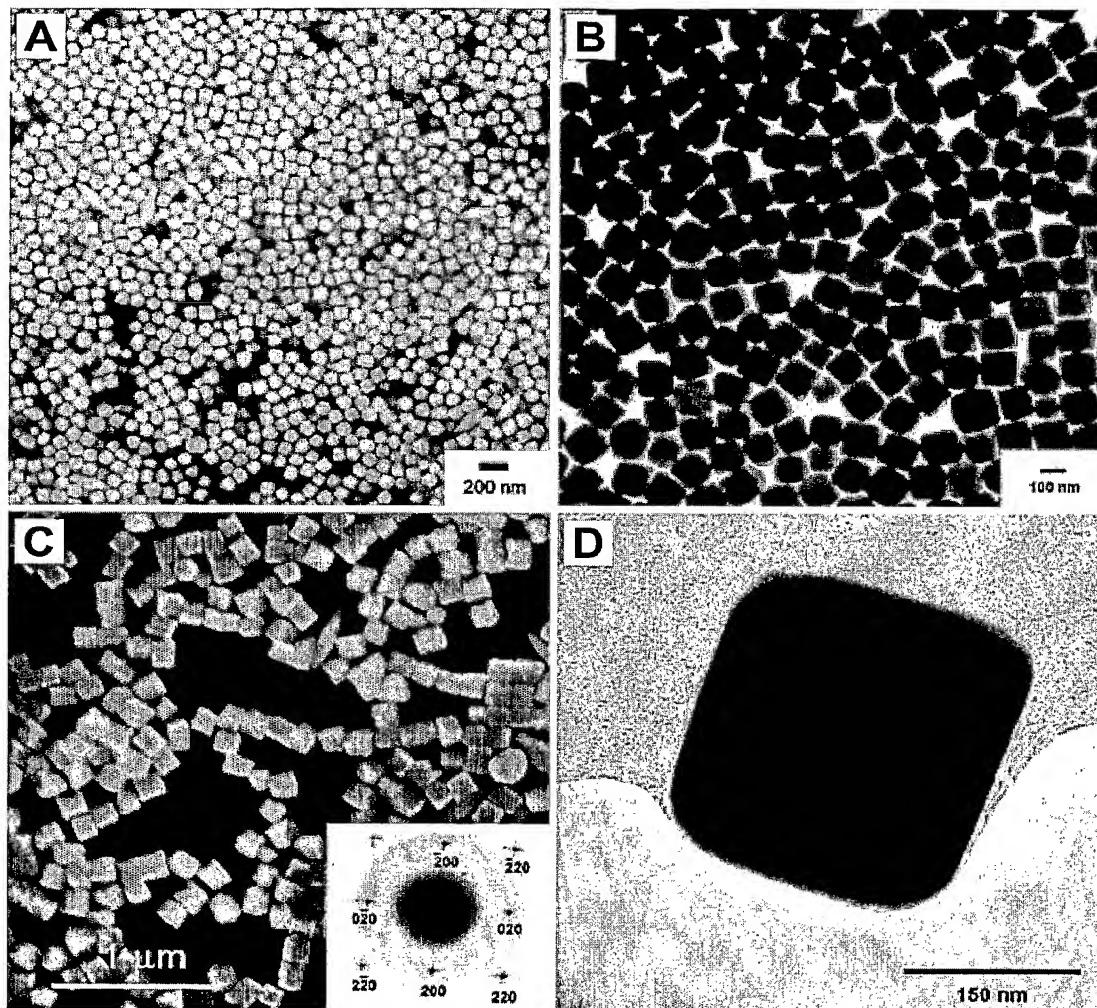
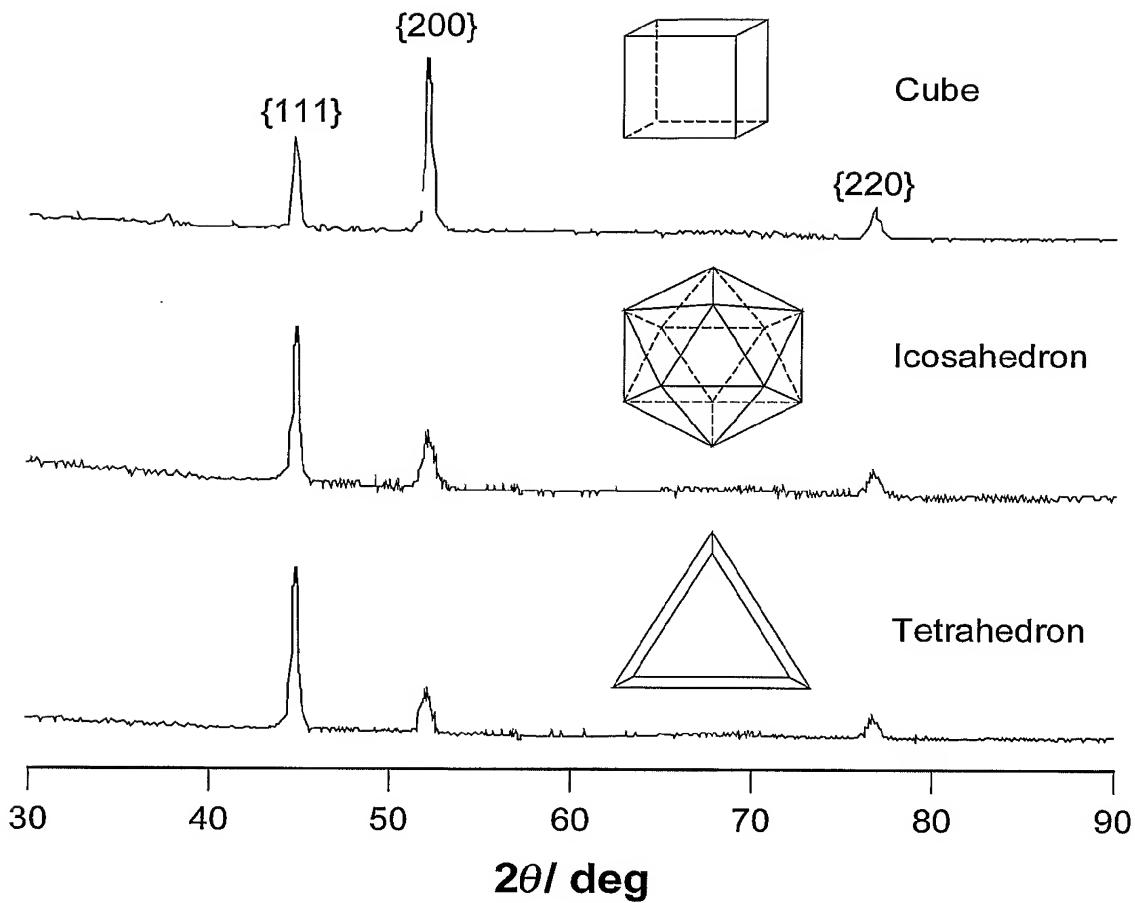
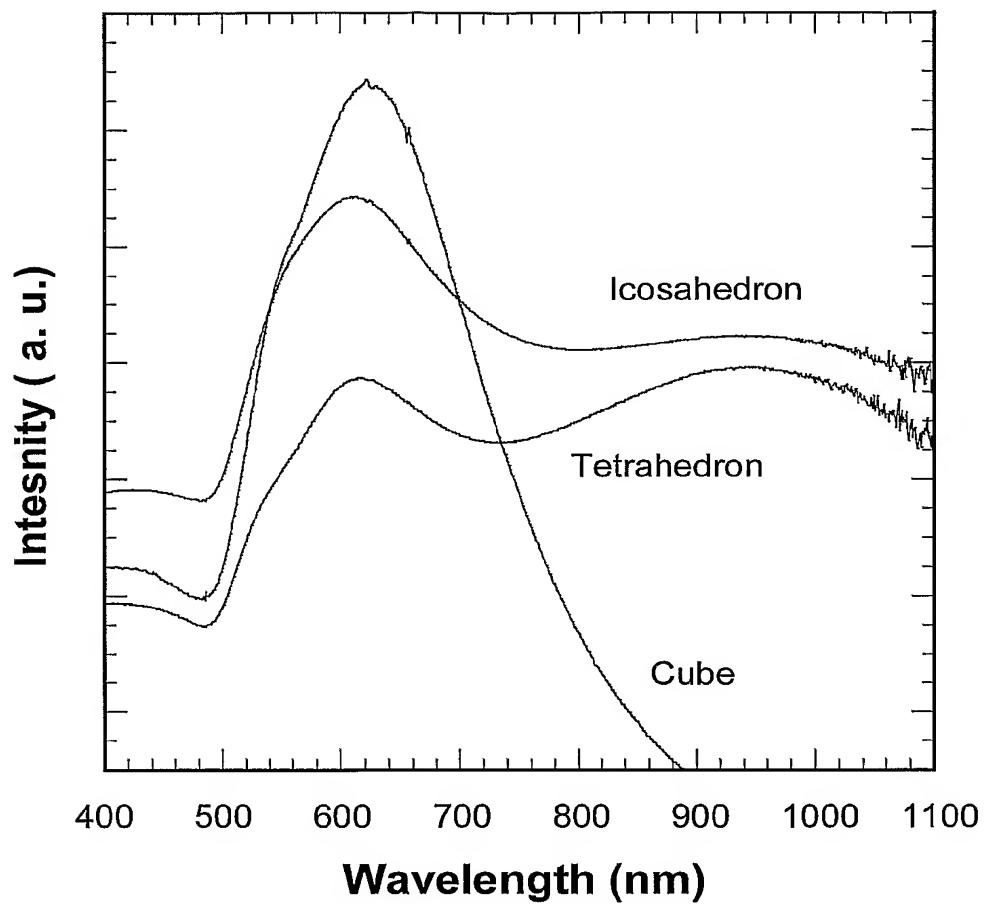


FIG. 19

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**FIG. 21**

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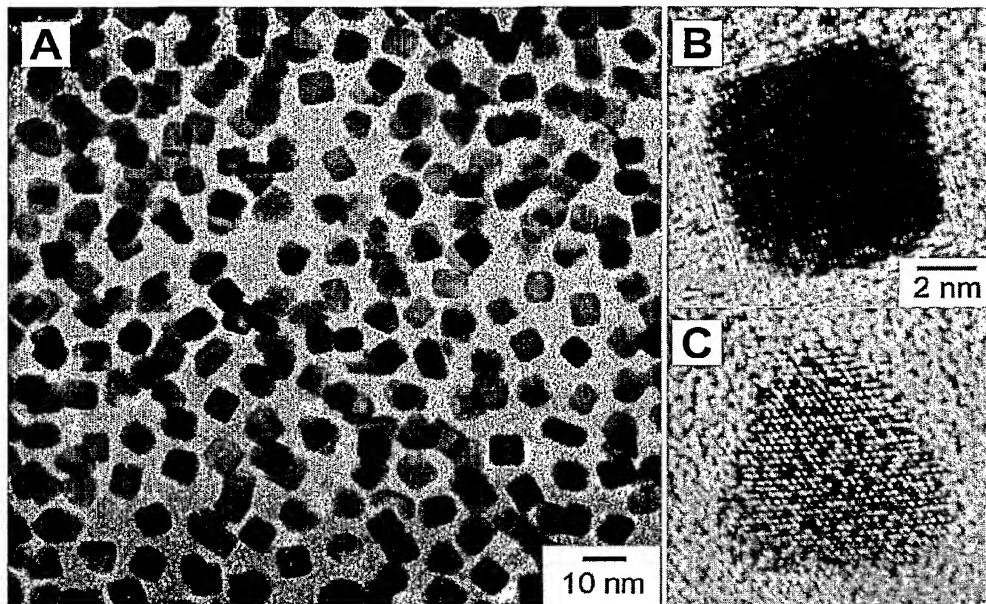


FIG. 22

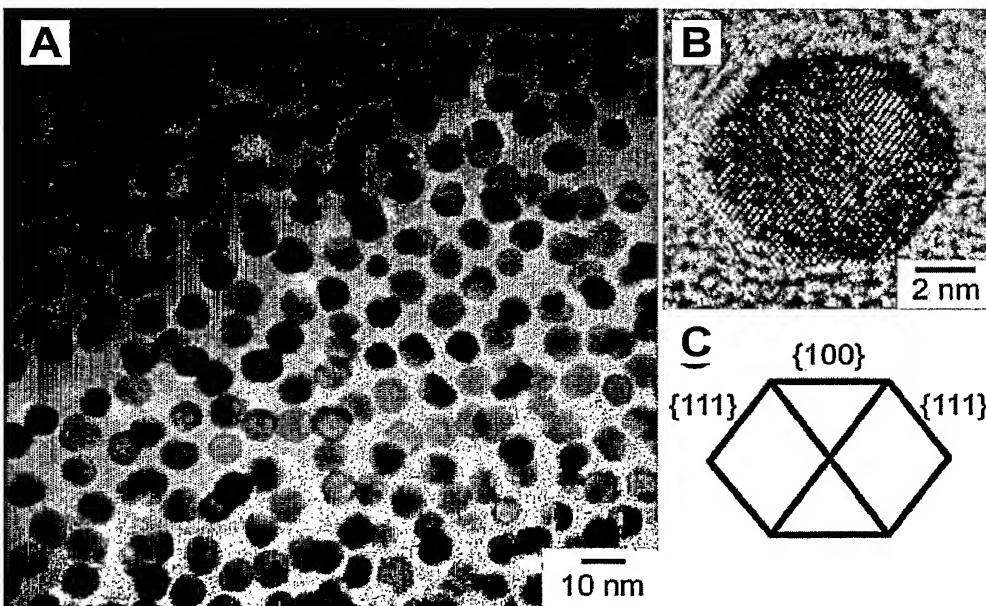
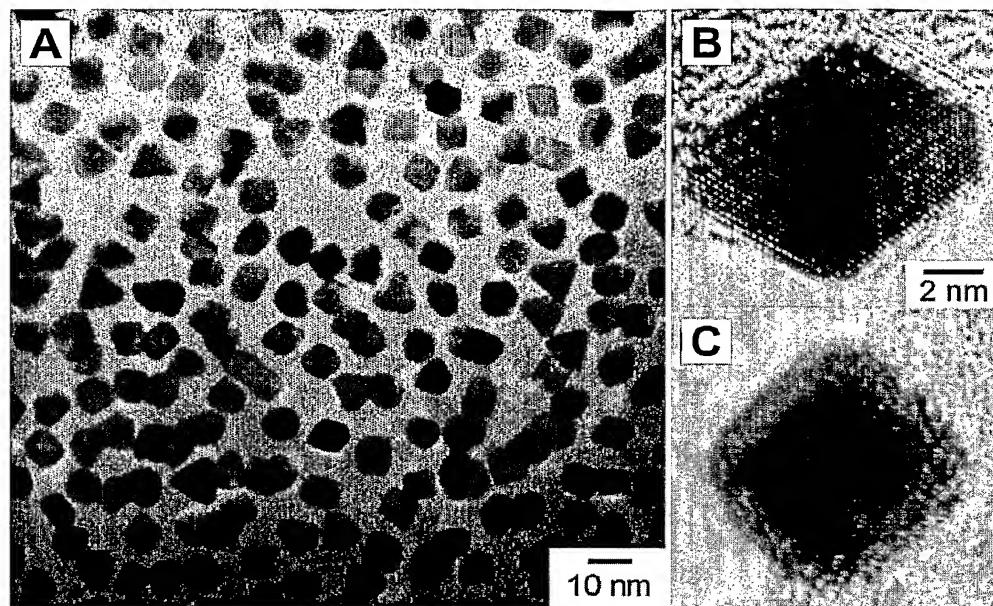
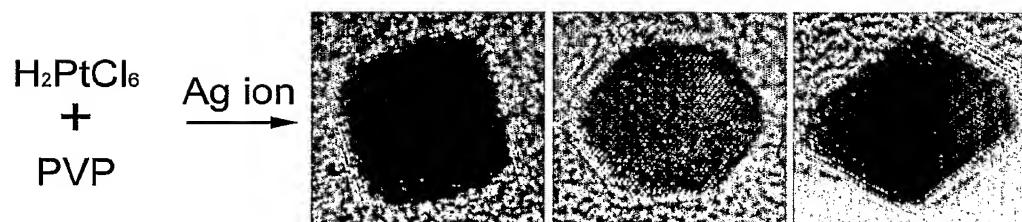


FIG. 23

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**FIG. 24****FIG. 25**

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